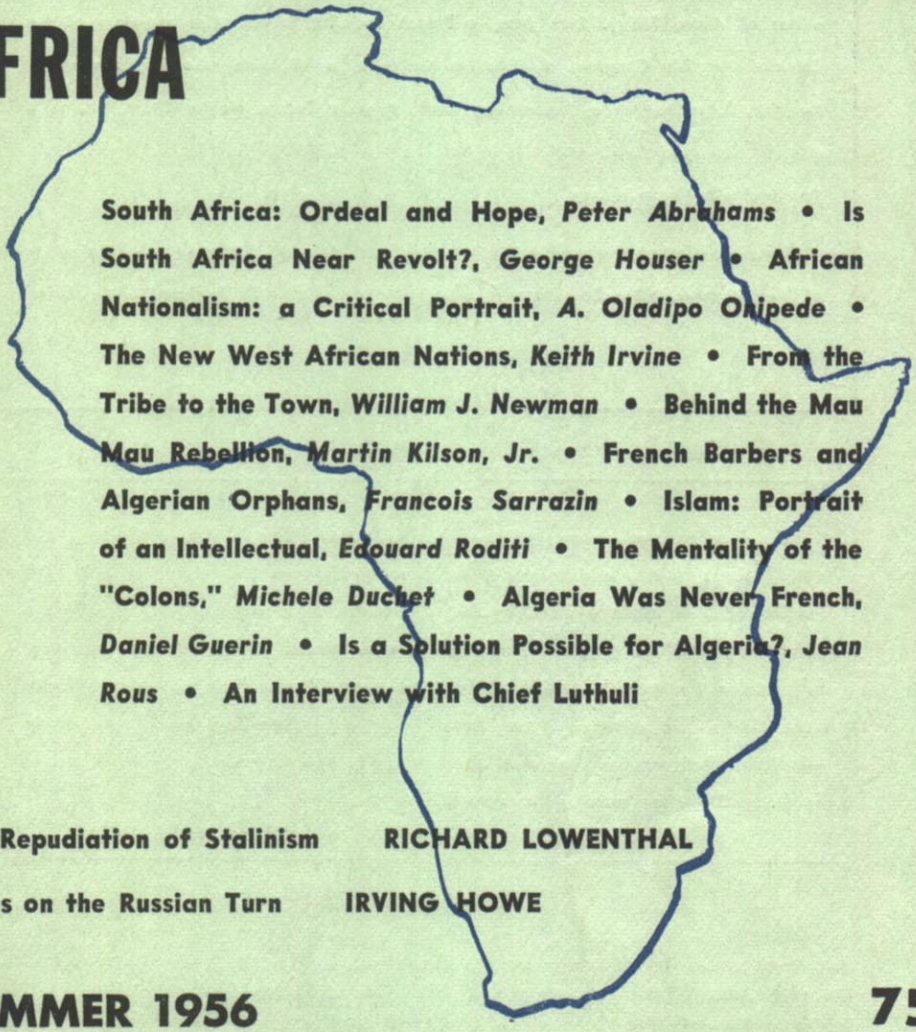
DISSENT

AFRICA



South Africa: Ordeal and Hope, *Peter Abrahams* • Is South Africa Near Revolt?, *George Houser* • African Nationalism: a Critical Portrait, *A. Oladipo Ohipede* • The New West African Nations, *Keith Irvine* • From the Tribe to the Town, *William J. Newman* • Behind the Mau Mau Rebellion, *Martin Kilson, Jr.* • French Barbers and Algerian Orphans, *Francois Sarrazin* • Islam: Portrait of an Intellectual, *Edouard Roditi* • The Mentality of the "Colons," *Michele Duchet* • Algeria Was Never French, *Daniel Guerin* • Is a Solution Possible for Algeria?, *Jean Rous* • An Interview with Chief Luthuli

The Repudiation of Stalinism — RICHARD LOWENTHAL

Notes on the Russian Turn — IRVING HOWE

SUMMER 1956 — **75c**

DISSENT

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The special section on Africa contains many new contributors. Two of them are leading members of the American Committee on Africa: George Houser, its executive secretary, who recently returned from a tour of Africa, and Keith Irvine, journalist and editor of *Africa Today*. Jean Rous, a French socialist, is executive secretary of the Colonial People's Congress. F. Oladipo Onipede, a Nigerian who has studied in America, is author of a forthcoming book, *Nigeria Today*. Martin Kilson, Jr., is a student who specializes in Middle Africa; he has published in the scholarly journals that deal with Negro history.

Richard Lowenthal is a well-known European journalist who is presently foreign editor of *The Observer*. Milton Sachs is a political writer who deals with Southeast Asian affairs.

As we go to press comes news of the valiant uprising in Poznan, Poland. We extend our sympathy and solidarity to these heroic men and women who braved terrible odds to make a stand against oppression. It is reported that many have fallen victim to the guns and tanks which were turned against them as unmercifully under the new Bulganin-Khrushchev dispensation as they would have been under Stalin. The undertaking may have been greater than its immediate resources —but the fact remains that men and women turned their wrath against tyranny. So doing, they gave heart to the cause of freedom.

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A QUARTERLY OF SOCIALIST OPINION

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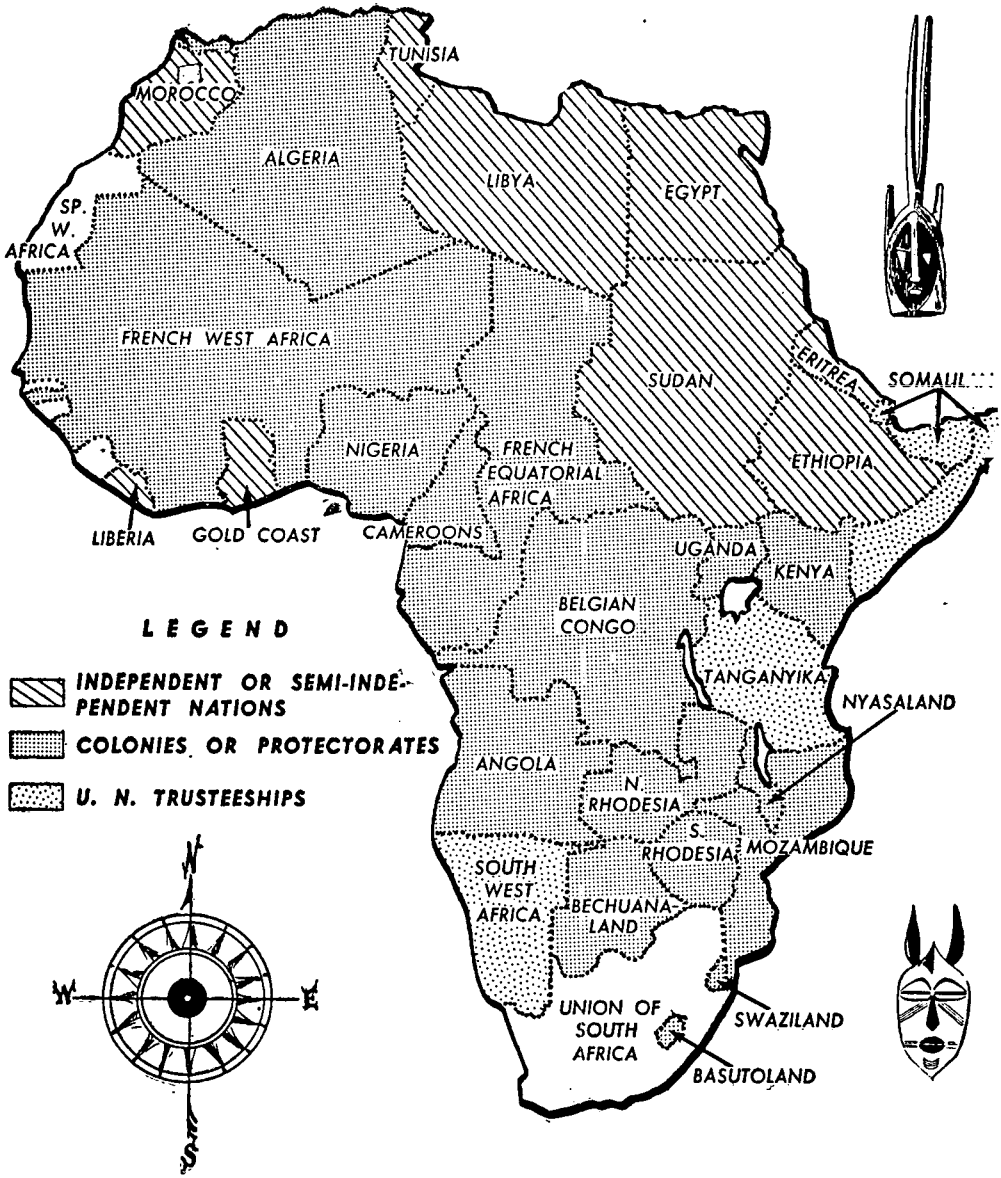

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AFRICA FINDS ITS VOICE

Stanley Plastrik

No sooner had the upheavals in Asia that followed upon the Second World War begun to subside a little than new and still more elemental social forces made themselves felt in the world. Africa, oldest of the continents in terms of life and perhaps of civilization, has burst into the arena of world affairs with a remarkable vitality and creativeness. This fact alone would justify devoting the bulk of an issue of DISSENT to a special section on Africa.

If "the world's last great uncommitted area," to employ Peter Abraham's description of the African continent, has finally entered the stream of modern history, then vast and revolutionary changes must be underway. And if Africa, hard upon the heels of Asia, has turned against the West which, for two centuries, treated this continent of 250 million people as a source of exploitation and an object of derision, then important revisions in our thinking and our attitudes become imperative.

The European colonial powers, though they painfully and fanatically resist each step, are being forced to recognize emergent Africa as an historical reality. The United States, transfixed by an inflexible policy that has caused it to lag behind and hesitantly acquiesce in traditional colonialism, has made little progress in its bid to inherit influence in colonial Africa through an exertion of its economic strength. At the same time, the weakness of Russian and Communist penetration in Africa provides further favorable circumstances for the growth of the African freedom movements.

To understand this new Africa, however, more is required than a grasp of the international background. The conquest of independence or semi-independence by such countries as Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt and the Sudan, together with the process that has set such countries as the Gold Coast, Nigeria and Togoland onto the road to freedom, is much more the consequence of those complex inner developments that we lump under the general label of nationalism.

It is this theme of African nationalism that binds together our three sub-sections (North Africa, Middle Africa and South Africa), a division based not on an obvious geographical demarcation but on the fact that the problems of each of these three areas, while deeply related to one another, tend to take distinct forms. Ranging from the violent out-

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burst in Kenya to the more evolutionary developments in West Africa, African nationalism is a vital and unique force that bears little resemblance to either its European predecessor which formed the nation-states of Western Europe in past centuries, or to Asiatic nationalism which based itself on ancient nations and cultures.

African nationalism is still in its infancy, but its enemies have been shrewd enough to see how enormous is its potential and have used every weapon of deceit and force to destroy it. No more dramatic illustration of this fact could be provided than by the present struggle in Algeria, to which we have devoted a series of short articles and documents. And here it is our duty to record the disgrace of the French Socialist Party—the party of Jaurès who first won fame by his denunciation of the rape of Algeria in the Chamber of Deputies!—the party whose present leadership is trying to reconquer Algeria, a task which the French Right could never have undertaken, let alone accomplished, on its own. The shameful effort of the Mollet government to preserve French domination in Algeria is in no way superior, either morally or politically, to the imperialism of the West or the imperialism of the East. Half a million armed men, under a "socialist" proconsul named Robert Lacoste, are attempting by military "saturation" to uproot and exterminate physically the incipient Algerian nation.

They cannot succeed! This is the inescapable conclusion of the section we present on Algeria. No matter how much blood continues to be shed, the French cannot win, just as they could not win in Indochina. Political solutions, as Mendès-France has recognized, must be found. Algeria, then, symbolizes in its most tragic form the renaissance of the Moslem world, a renaissance which, as Edouard Roditi describes it, has both its positive and disturbing elements.

In our second section we move into what is known as Sub-Saharan Africa. Here William Newman introduces the reader to the key issues of social and political life in Central Africa, where the question of liberation becomes still more complex and sharply different from the forms familiar to Western political thought. Enormous social, economic and political tasks demand accomplishment with primitive means in telescoped time.

This political theme is common to that whole vast area between the Islamic North and the Union of South Africa. Tribalism, urbanism and industrialization, agrarian problems and the impact of Western education and ideas, are a few of the central issues. In the main, however, our contributors concern themselves primarily with questions of political growth and conflict. Martin Kilson, Jr. analyzes in scholarly detail the origins and causes of the Mau Mau, warning that the factors behind its growth remain as potent as ever and that they are to be found, incipiently, wherever white settlers and their racialist outlook predominate. Keith Irvine describes West Africa's political evolution and points up growing sources of inner disturbance within African

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nationalism itself, as seen in Nigeria and the Gold Coast. And F. Oladipo Onipede, in an essay that perhaps clears new ground, probes to certain basic problems that lie at the heart of African nationalism—the place of traditional African culture in the free states of tomorrow; the growing conflict between the Westernized African intellectual and the traditional or indigenous leadership; the role of tribal life, racial and ethnic groups; the task of finding a viable economic base for the new countries.

It is in response to these problems that African nationalism proves itself to be so distinctive. If national states that are to live and thrive must be constructed out of a conglomerate of tribes, groups and races at all levels of development, and if they must be built on the flimsy foundations of backward economies, then the traditional forms of nationalism alone will hardly do. The emerging African states cannot live on parliamentarism, one-crop or metal ore export economies and amorphous political parties; if they try to, they are likely to degenerate into authoritarian caricatures such as the American-inspired Liberia.

Nor, let us frankly admit, can African nationalism look to the Western democratic or socialist world with much enthusiasm or hope. In our concluding section on South Africa, where the tragedy of imperialism reaches its starkest form, both Peter Abrahams and George Houser underscore this point. Though the West, despite itself, has helped train an African leadership that is sufficiently educated in order to set nationalism into motion, henceforth the West has little to offer Africa. Even the most advanced views of Western revolutionaries—for example, that industrialization in "backward countries" would bring with it a revolutionary working class under a vanguard socialist leadership, or that the formation of urban classes would create focal points of strength which in turn would unify peoples and bring Africa into the Twentieth Century (that is, *our* image of the Twentieth Century)—all this has proven faulty, in part at least, and has shown itself not to be sufficiently related to the intimate and complex realities of African life. If Africa is to know a better fate than that of Western progressive and revolutionary movements, its leadership will have to find ways of blending the intellectual and technological achievements of the West with the needs and traditions of African life itself. It is this idea that is developed in concrete detail and is the main theme of the articles that follow.

•

We should like here to express our appreciation to our contributors, particularly those who are new to DISSENT, for having made this issue possible; and particularly to George Houser of the American Committee on Africa whose assistance and advice were both generous and invaluable.

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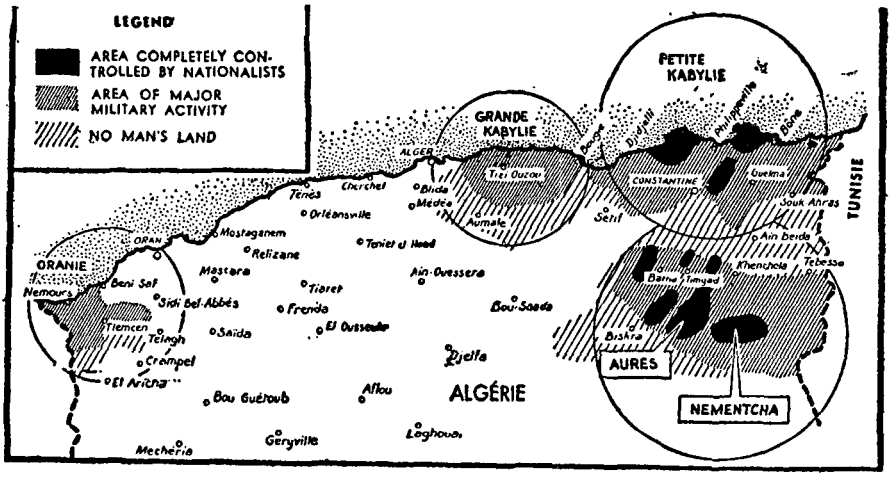
THE WAR IN ALGERIA



Grand and Petite Kabylie: Coastal mountain ranges

1. "This Climate of Hate and Fear"

A French Official writes from Algeria

Each night, in the midst of exhausting work, I try to state the problem anew, to gather the threads, to see my way clear.

What can I tell you that you don't know? Nothing. The frightening atmosphere—the climate of hate and violence—the incredible effort it takes to find oneself again, to get back to one's overall view of the problem. I feel that unless decisions are taken in favor of negotiations, terrible things are bound to happen here.

In your eyes I am no doubt too deeply involved in the system. Objectively I am participating in this war, on the side of the colonialists. My God, it's not all so simple! The temptation was strong to go back home: "I'm not going to eat this kind of bread. I am a man of the 'left' and I'm not going to take part in this business . . ."

I am staying here just a little longer with the intense hope that a Socialist policy in Algeria cannot be the pol-

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icy of Faure or Soustelle. Until proof to the contrary I am holding on to this belief, without being overly particular about blunders like Mollet's trip and speech. Meanwhile, I am trying my best to protect isolated farmers, to protect families, to help them avoid the blind thrusts of the Army. At times I am not proud of some uncontrolled reflex, or of having held my peace in some conversation. The pressure is terrible: Newspapers, radio, conversations, everyday talks—all converging toward the same conclusion: "They" understand nothing but force—let's deal them one big blow.

SOMETIMES you contrast the "big" with the "little" whites. That's a great mistake. Even if you are poor trash, in a century's time you get used to having beneath you others who are more miserable than you, and you cling to this state of affairs with all your might. A foreman here would be a laborer in France, an overseer a worker, etc. On each level everybody clings to his little kingdom and nobody wants to let go. Here's one of my most important discoveries here: All the French in Algeria, from the biggest to the smallest, stick together—a sort of shameful solidarity in damnation.

For the Algerian French, the idea of progress toward equality is inconceivable. To say they are mad, that they fool themselves, that they are being fooled won't get us anywhere. Whatever we might want to do we will have to do against *all* the French in Algeria. They cannot understand anything but their own interests, no matter how small. A simple clerk in the sub-prefect feels outraged by the idea that he could no longer order the "chaouch" around.

WHAT can we do? Save what can be saved through negotiations, without panic and without surrender? I don't know any longer. I feel that we absolutely must negotiate. We are in a total impasse and 100,000 more men won't change the facts. But it is getting late; what might have been saved earlier cannot be saved today. I feel so ashamed, seeing the Europeans' hatred and the hatred we have unchained here. Every day I see assassinations, mouths cut, throats slit. It's hard to stay calm. What an insane world! Do you still believe in brotherhood or in friendship among nations? Where does it exist? Yesterday I was ambushed and very nearly killed by buckshot. What a preposterous end that would have been! A man of deep sincere leftist convictions, here in order to retain just a little contact, killed by people who fight for their liberty! That can make you think!

Still another discovery I have made here, comparable to one in Indochina. The army—commanders, captains, lieutenants—how troubled they are! How hesitant! Sometimes (the better ones) how torn! What happened to the antimilitarism of my youth? The army is something that lives, moves, wonders. Among some officers certain values which seem to have all but vanished here still exist: a sense of greatness, of work well done; conscience; disinterestedness. A funny thing for an old leftist to discover!

I felt like talking with you tonight —alone in this hostile city, amidst people whom I can no longer recognize as speaking my language (the Europeans here) and in the face of Algerians with whom we have very few contacts and sometimes such inhuman and desperate contacts. Goodbye.

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2. "A Terrible Responsibility on the Party of Jaurès . . ."

A group of leading members of the Algerian federation of the French Socialist Party recently sent a letter to the Executive Committee of the French Socialist Party protesting the repressive measures of the Mollet government in Algeria. Excerpts follow:

The policy which the government is following since February 6 is one which fills us with bitterness and anxiety. Its president is imposing terrible responsibilities on the party of Jaurès . . .

Today one can no longer talk of pacification, nor even of blind repression; practically, the unfortunate Moslem populations of the Constantine region and of Kabylia, most of which still trusted the Socialist Party and republican France, are exposed to a campaign of extermination.

Where is this policy going to end? Comrades in Parliament and comrades in the Executive Committee, will you allow it to continue? Do you believe that socialist militants who have not lost their heads can accept it? Are you considering the revulsion that will seize public opinion in France and abroad when the sad truth will be known at last, in spite of all the pains taken to hide it?

The party took a position on the Algerian question at its last National Congress. Neither its ministers nor its Executive Committee has the right to deliberately act against its will, and to ignore its decisions . . .

We demand that a fact-finding commission be appointed by the party and sent to Algeria to investigate the situation and to check the truth of the assertions we have made throughout the letter.

If the party should refuse to listen to us, it would only remain for us to disavow publicly, and by all means we may find useful, an insane policy which would forever discredit the party and its public figures.

3. A Dossier on Repression in Algeria*

French public opinion has been deeply stirred by the increasingly detailed news of widespread repression in Algeria. *Témoignage Chrétien* published in its January 6th issue an appeal of 700 political internees held in the camp of Djorf near M'Sila. This open letter does not deal with conditions inside the camp but denounces the illegal character of the internment measures and calls for immediate dissolution of the camps. The same paper in its January 20th issue publishes a document dealing with the summary execution of six members of a family between August 22 and 26, 1955. *France-Observateur* published on December 8th two affidavits on tortures undergone last August by Mohammed Benmokkaden when he was arrested and detained for questioning at the civilian prison in Algiers and similar treatment inflicted in November 1955, in Algiers as well as in Blida at the central Commissariat and at the police stations, on Mustapha Ben Mohammed, municipal councillor of the City of Algiers.

The CICRC (International Commission Against Concentration Camps),

* Prepared by the International Commission Against Concentration Camps. One of its reports (on camps in Russia) appeared in the Spring 1950 DISSENT.

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upon opening an investigation into the conditions and nature of repression in Algeria has officially gotten in touch with all those who in some way have recently testified on the subject. The first information received seems to establish:

• Flagrantly illegal procedures in arresting and detaining Algerian Moslems in France (mass arrests made during September in Paris, Lyon, Marseille, Valenciennes, Metz, Roubaix, Le Havre; those arrested being sent back to Algeria by plane in handcuffs) and similar procedures in Algeria.

• Grave outrages committed against those arrested or interrogated at police stations, by the gendarmerie and DST (French FBI).

• Internment camps, said to exist specifically at Lodi, Berrouaghia, Aflou, Bossuet, Djorf; all camps being surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by gendarmes or soldiers...

• These internment camps have officially been called "lodging centers." The law of April 3, 1955, establishing a state of emergency in Algeria, grants the authorities special powers. Article 6, while giving the right to confine a person to a definite place of residence, explicitly excludes the establishment of detention camps. The places of forced residence, however, were established in the south of three Algerian departments, outside any inhabited area. Persons sentenced to forced residence therefore had to be "sheltered"; hence the creation of "lodging centers." In actuality, the Governor General and Prefects intern where by law they have only the right to pronounce a sentence of forced residence.

• The plaintiffs' lawyers protest that the unlawfulness of the Governor General's and the Prefects' measures has become aggravated since the dissolution of the Algerian National Assembly, an act which ought to have abrogated the law on the state of emergency and of the measures enforcing it. Instead, to this day the only thing has been the release on December 9, 1955 of 249 Algerians arrested in France in September and interned at Berrouaghia, and of a few dozen others since. Several thousand persons must at this moment still be confined in camps.

• Conditions in camps and prisons vary widely. In the prison of Blida, for instance, the Moslem prisoners seem to be deprived of their right to worship; hygienic conditions are execrable, sanitation deliberately bad; political internees are put in with common criminals. At Lodi camp no measures are taken to keep diseases from spreading; syphilitic and tubercular internees are not isolated. These complaints on hygienic conditions and lack of medical care seem to be quite general.

NOTE:
In preparing this section on North Africa, we have been indebted to the French radical press: "France-Observateur" for the letter from the French official; "Esprit" for the articles by Sarrazin and Duchet; "La Revue Socialiste" for the article by Rous. In the latter articles some material has been omitted.

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4. FRENCH BARBERS AND ALGERIAN ORPHANS

Francois Sarrazin

Algeria is the key to the North African question. It is through her that the French will either perish or come back to life. Heaven knows, it is not a matter of abandoning the security, honestly acquired property and legitimate liberties of those who have been established for generations, in some cases, on the other shore of the Mediterranean. In Algeria, only 12 per cent of these were born in France; the majority have deep and abiding ties with North Africa. We have no right to dismiss with a shrug of the shoulders the awkward despair of one Santiago, a farm official: "Where do you want me to go, after all? I have no other country to go to..."

Such people as these, whether we like it or not, are part of the Algerian community; part of its flesh and blood, for better or worse.

Now the worst is here to plague us. The upsurge in population is less the cause of hunger than its effect. It results from the implantation of chronic hunger, successor to past famines. In Algeria, the annual *per capita* production of wheat has dropped from 880 lbs. in 1900 to 440 lbs. in 1950. In Morocco, the average quantity of the total cereal production available per inhabitant fell from 904 lbs. in the 1934-40 period to 743 during the 1948-53 period. In Tunisia, the situation is similar.

I

"Is this the case of a young man," wrote General Daumas in 1868, "who came too quickly to power and now feverishly applies himself to his work; whose inexperienced actions are a continual source of complaint to his subjects? Let us say with the Arabs: barbers learn shaving by practicing on the heads of orphans."

In keeping with our juridical, centralizing and unifying concepts we French sought to establish an Algerian régime identical with our own, refusing to recognize that French laws cannot be transplanted mechanically, that they by no means have the magic virtue of Gallicizing all lands they touch, that other societies resist and defend themselves and that the present must take close account of the past. Jules Ferry added:

> Algeria is beginning to discover that she is paying dearly for the benefit of our civil regulations... Legislative assimilation is wearing down and cracking at every point.

He wrote this in 1892, and yet, in 1916, the Resident-Generals of the two protectorates were still pointing out that both Moroccans and Tunisians considered the Algerian régime as shocking and regarded it with a feeling of horror. In 1854, an important administrative official cried out for "a more human administration." He denounced the policy of "kicking the natives around" and found he could count no more than 6 Moslems out of a total of 334 officials listed in the government's telephone directory. He noted that the Prefecture of Algiers

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had gotten along without an interpreter for two or three years and deplored the loss of human contact.

The protectorate formula has fewer inconveniences. But if Lyautey's criticisms made in 1920 ("we have direct administration on the brain . . . we are not patient . . . almost every feature of our administration more or less yields to the view that holds the natives to be an inferior race") were to have been met, we would have had to act differently.

At best, the present administration pursues a course outside of space and time. It generously subsidizes the publication of a scholarly work on the Vandals, but pays no attention when a young and significant Moslem writer brings into focus for us the tragic arena of armed revolt:

> Here is the street of the Vandals. A street of Algiers or of Constantine, of Setif or Guelma, of Tunis or Casablanca . . . Here is the street of the Vandals, of shadows and militants, of circumcised kids and and newlyweds; this is our street. (Yacine Kateb in *Le Cadavre Encerclé*)

Ignorance, alas, fosters evil. Relations between humans too often are limited to those of master and servant. According to Mohammed Dib, the "*fatmas* (servants) are the only link between different elements of the Algerian population, between misery and luxury." How many administrators in Morocco have never known any Moslems other than their sweepers and attendants!

It must be said that a rather strong odor of *racism* is to be found at the bottom of all this. In current North African life Martinez mistreats Mohammed and the Parisian Dupont despises Martinez. It is impossible to account for the anti-Moslem racism of many North African colonists unless we recall, first of all, that in many instances the people involved have only been recently naturalized and are instinctively compensating for their foreign origin by a xenophobic, hyper-French reaction. Secondly, the equally numerous Corsicans of North Africa frequently combine a violent nature with a traditionally doubtful patriotism.

It is no less true now than ever before that injustice is at the root of so-called racial superiority, be it conscious or latent. A French official, even though deploring this truth, has affirmed it:

> It is hardly possible to hear an "anti-French" Algerian tell about his past without discovering at the root of his hatred some slight or offense by us. Whether or not it was intentional, he is or believes himself to be the victim.

II

Two groups of North African Moslems deserve special consideration. First, the immigrant workers in France, because they are our guests and because they once believed in us; secondly, the war veterans, who joined their blood with ours on every battlefield in our country's last three wars.

Is it generally known that one out of every seven adult Algerian Moslems lives in France? They are estimated at 300,000—somewhat fewer than the Spaniards or Poles among us and half the number of Italians. Poverty is not the only cause of this migration. "In Paris," writes an Algerian student, "you can pass unseen by your own people and by the rest of the world; to escape racism, you lose yourself in the crowd." Alas,

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there's no escaping police roundups, house searchings and other police operations. Last September 530,000 people were checked.

As for the war veterans, they were abandoned; handed over to be plucked by middlemen. Like the others they are treated as politically suspect and frequently fall victim to jittery police agents. Their only consolations consists in parades in which they march in rags.

Some among them, in desperation, see no other course but violence. The Algerian "outlaws" number many a bitter and disillusioned regular army man.

Others try a different course. On August 30, 1950 a certain Moha ou-Hassein Ntifi, a Spahi wounded in 1940, completed his tour of duty. Upon his return home he found that his plot of land had been broken up. He lodged a complaint before the court of his Berber tribe; his case was dismissed. He made an appeal. Thrown into prison for having a "bad attitude," he tried all possible appeals. In vain. Each new effort cost him another prison term. In despair he tried to get a hearing at the Imperial Palace. No success.

Then, he took his property deeds, the court finding, his military papers, his decorations and his prison papers, wrapped them all up in a red flag belonging to the priest of Ait-Abbas and set out. After one year, begging, wandering about, hiring himself out as a field hand, going from settlement to settlement across North Africa and the Near East, through Marrakesh, Tlemcen, Tripoli, Cairo, Jerusalem, Damascus, Aleppo, Baghdad and Kirkouk, this "wandering Moslem" finally reached Persian Kurdistan, where he fell on the earth, worn out and reduced to eating his own lice mixed with some leftover flour.

Where was he going to? Having no confidence in anyone, neither the French nor his own brothers, he wanted to join the country they said gave help to the oppressed and to throw himself at Stalin's feet... The story of Moha ou-Hassein, Berber of Azilal, who had never been in politics and knew nothing of communism, might serve as a subject for reflection by those intoxicated with the sound of words. Shipped back to Morocco, poor Moha presented his case once more. But this time he was again imprisoned for having brought an "unjustified complaint," since, you see, he had lost his papers!

III

Esparto grass and vineyards continue to be the *alpha* and *omega* of Algerian politics. The king of the esparto grass economy plays the role of an enlightened despot. The wine king is less discreet. He is fond of uniforms, has the best of friendly relations with the police, tenders banquets to the Italian Expeditionary Corps veterans and presents the flag to the Volunteers of the Resistance (although, it seems, he never belonged to them). As for gentlemen of lesser importance, the piety of one doesn't prevent him from arbitrarily holding back twenty francs daily from each of his 3,000 agricultural workers, while another, thanks to insistent reminders, cannot cloak in oblivion his former connections with the fascists Doriot and Fabiani.

Given such "duly elected officials," we can understand the reaction of the "Tiger" Clemenceau when the mayors of Algeria protested against

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Moslems voting in municipal elections. Clemenceau told them: "Gentlemen, for my part, you can all go to hell!" If only they had been spoken to more often in this way!

Some day, the secret history of Algeria must be written. It would contain, for example, the *Doineau affaire.* Head of the Arab Bureau at Tlemcen, Doineau was an officer with a healthy appetite and quick reflexes. Having learned that his *Agha* was on the way to Algiers to complain about him, Doineau got himself up as a bandit, leaped on his horse and, dragging along with him a few cavalrymen, attacked the stagecoach, killing the *Agha* and all the passengers!

Our own time is less blatant. Its maneuvers are often executed with a muffled tread. There is nothing calmer and more dignified than an inauguration at Constantine. But in the midst of all this what becomes of the millions of Moslems whose country it is, after all, which is being despoiled.

•

IN THE BROADEST sense, what could *be more stupid and more dangerous* than a program of pure and simple "repression" of disorder? Far from being effective, it turns against its originators. We can cite eight incontestable results of this policy, results which, in all probability were not wanted either by its inspirers or executors.

• The innocent are most often the principal victims. To further the policy of penal coercion we know that in October 1954, a child of eight purged his guilt in the prison of Ali Ou-Moumen, and that an "arsonist" of six was held in custody at Montfleury (near Fès). The Moroccan father who brought his children to the visitors' room of one of these establishments to see their little friends could say, with justice, "They might as well get used to these things."

• When a person has had the honor of knowing North African jails under the proconsulship of General Noguès, he understands to what extent the prison community draws together the innocents held in custody. There the tender become hardened.

• Nations are forged in secrecy. The bourgeois of Fès were not suspected of "Berberism." But when a teacher of Arab was "evacuated" to a "center" where his neighbors, for the most part, were Berbers he had to occupy his enforced leisure with the study of a language and customs which he'll not soon forget.

• The prisoners, the executed, the dishonored of today will be held up as martyrs and heroes tomorrow. He who is humiliated today, his feet in irons (contrary to regulations), will one day give his name to the streets of his native city. Go read the plaques set up in the main streets of the "decolonized" capitals!

• "It is impossible even for a stranger to walk through the streets of Oued-Zem without sensing an instinctive for vengeance... But vengeance breeds vengeance and we enter a vicious circle." (Stewart Alsop, *Herald Tribune,* August 26, 1955.) Our dignity founders in repressions which, in turn, call forth revolt.

• Each operation, each cleanup inevitably carries with it the exodus to the maquis of the effective male population in the zone dealt with. Thus, the rebels win recruits without difficulty. "The French army has helped us a lot," said a leader of one of the bands.

• Hard upon each wave of repres-

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sion, the entire population takes its place as one man in the camp of revolt. The young cannot bear inaction, life without the supreme risk. The "moderate" politicians are confronted with the alternative: treason or death.

• Lastly, those Frenchmen who are charged with maintaining order, end up by asking themselves questions, by wondering whether their cause is just, whether they have not been saddled with a doubtful mission. It is certain that we do not know in the name of what we could demand of someone that he impassively take part in torture, or in a summary execution. In certain cases obedience becomes immoral. And under all circumstances, including action on the firing line, it is necessary that something, some element of conscience, face squarely up against instinct and offer itself as a counterweight.

Such are the singular effects of repression. In the end, in the words of François Mauriac, it is France who, by dishonoring herself, disarms herself.

5. THE MENTALITY OF THE "COLONS"

Michèle Duchet

What is the privileged French minority defending in Algeria? A past of ease and comfort that certain of them already regard with remorse. Some try to deny what is happening and desperately reject this image of an Algerian people suddenly transformed into a rebellious mass that only yesterday was silent and wrap themselves in a blindness that is to serve their interests to the bitter end. But among these colonists there are a few who question themselves.

In a country where 70 percent of the population lives from agriculture, where the essential problem is that of land, where the colonial regime has concentrated over 5 million acres in the hands of 6,000 big landowners, nothing can keep the colonist from becoming the symbol of a state of repression of which he was until now the chief beneficiary. Certain of them now say they are its victims, and if the best of them recognize the evils that follow from the economic and social structure to which until now they had accommodated themselves without remorse, they believe, in good faith, that they were not "responsible." They regard themselves as doubly innocent: historically and morally. It is not we, they say, who conquered Algeria. As they see it, their history opens with the coming of those courageous pioneers who cleared the untilled land, drained the swamps, and spread everywhere the benefits of civilization, thereby establishing doubly their rights to the possession of land "legally" acquired. They have improved these lands under conditions that were often difficult: it is only just that their sons should have har-

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vested the fruits—they are "in the colony" as others are "in business," from father to son.

Those who define themselves in this way clearly do not belong to the circles of the big colonists; but what exactly do they represent? To be sure, the capitalist phenomenon of the concentration of land has drawn a rather clear line between "big business" and the small or middle colonists who work their lands themselves. It would be harder to state precisely where big property begins and middle-sized exploitation ends. Should one distinguish according to the number of acres? In Algeria there are only 6,000 owners with more than 1,250 acres. They represent less than a fourth of the European landowners. Beside them, 8,000 small colonists possess less than 25 acres and 11,000 who have between 25 and 250 acres represent the middle group of colonists. But it is not enough to consider merely the size of a property: in a country like Algeria, the nature of the soil and the geographical situation have decided influence on the yield: among the middle colonists, certain ones control rich, well-irrigated lands that are among the best vineyards or wheat farms.

Should the criterion be the size of income? the mode of life? One would then have to note that many of the middle bracket colonists lead a life comparable to that of the big French landowners. Whether they want to or not, they derive from their lands a high profit through the low wages of their workers.

THE MIDDLE COLONIST defines himself by his behavior and mentality, especially to the degree that he adopts a "humanitarian" attitude, which he thinks distinguishes him from the "big colonist." To be sure, he does not go so far as to condemn the latter, whose cynicism and ferocious exploitation he often disregards. He simply doesn't belong to the same species: while integrating himself in a colonial system, he doesn't identify with it completely: he has some "honorable" reservations, he is concerned about law and justice. He pays his workers at the official rate, he allows them the social benefits provided by the law, and he doesn't play politics.

But why does he respect the law? He is not required to do so and he knows it. There is then a moral commitment on his part, which is not, however, as disinterested as he would like to believe. It is not from his own free choice that he guarantees his workers a wage that permits them to live. The official rate varies from region to region; it is in any case very much below a "vital minimum" (even if one reduces the latter to a supposed Algerian level). The "good" colonist regrets—sometimes—its inadequacy, but he is content to pay the agricultural worker this "legal" wage. The fact is that in adhering to the law, he is making his own moral responsibility; he limits himself to respecting the law and so he believes that there is nothing for which to reproach himself. He fails to see that his "humanity" presupposes his acceptance of an order of things of which the justice remains unquestioned.

If one calls his attention to the "existence of others," he will reply that *his* workers are well off, that he treats them well and they have no complaints. He will admit that not all the colonists behave as he does; he will readily denounce those who abuse

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their rights, and, most strongly, those who corrupt the ideal of the colonist.

On the other hand, if his own workers "budge" (a revealing euphemism: he sees the Arab as immobile), he talks of their ingratitude. His "humaneness" which recognizes no rights, creates duties for those it claims as its beneficiary.

And that goodness of his which is addressed to some men who are chosen as objects, almost as pretexts, how could it save him from those thousands of others, nameless and faceless, whom he casts out of his life and who starve without his ever giving them a glance? Perhaps he thinks that the "good" Arabs share his indifference. But these innumerable victims of an evil which is beyond his charity erect between him and those who surround him the invisible barrier of hate. Of this the colonist has no awareness; for these men, who must confront a past and a future equally burdened with misery, his paternalism is only a ridiculous alms.

THE SELF-IMPOSED isolation into which the colonist has withdrawn cannot prevent his having to confront tomorrow those who make no distinction between "good" and "bad" settlers. An accounting of his present choice —not some vague moral purity—will be asked. They were not responsible for the conquest of Algeria, but are they so innocent of what has been done to Algeria since its conquest?

Even in his own village the colonist hardly gets about. Rarely does he go beyond the limits of a narrow space within which he finds those familiar features of a French village: a church, the town hall, shops. He retains the same picture of colonization that he saw in the history books of his childhood. Out there, the desert, mysterious Islam, a fatalistic people, a vista from which every human thing has vanished. If he came closer, he might see that those mounds of earth are actually huts in which death in every form dwells, that those desolate areas are scratched by the plow, that a people who wish to survive on what colonization has left it still cling to those barren rocks. But the human world stops for the colonist with the twenty workers who sleep in his barn. Beyond that lies the *bled* (wasteland), unknown space out of which alone could come this savage insurrection, this unforeseen explosion like a blast of the *sirocco*.

6. ALGERIA WAS NEVER FRENCH

Daniel Guerin

The French government insists that Algeria is part of France. History shows that Algeria never was French and that the Algerian nation is an historic fact whose existence has been either concealed or disfigured.

Before its conquest Algeria was a well-defined country, an Arabic-Berber community cemented by a unity

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of language and religion. In 1830 its cultural level was much higher than is generally imagined. It had brilliant intellectual centers, some 2,000 schools and several universities. The city of Tlemcen, among others, still bears witness today to this civilization.

Since the 16th century the Regency of Algiers has been a sovereign state. In the 17th century it freed itself completely from Turkish tutelage. It led a national and international life over a long period, recognized by numerous countries, including France. Francis I sought an alliance with it. The French Revolution was only too happy to be supplied by it and even to borrow money. The Algerian state was an organized one; it had a central and provincial administration comparable to that of other countries. Venture de Paradis, a French traveler, stated that according to his own observations the Algerian state, even with its weaknesses, was a reality. In 1802, the Regency had an army of 15,000 men and a fleet of 66 ships.

After 1830, this historic patrimony was systematically destroyed by the conquerors. Schools and universities disappeared, certain mosques were transformed into churches, the Arabic language was no longer taught. Listen to De Tocqueville: "We have reduced Algerian society to a much more miserable and barbaric state than it was before."

READ the magnificent "Algerian Manifesto" written by Ferhat Abbas in 1943. It states that the Algerian Moslem has undergone a "truly devastating destruction" and that the people have been dispossessed to such a point that they are miserable foreigners in their own country.

Nonetheless, this "scorched earth" policy with respect to the country and its cultural aspirations, never succeeded in killing the idea of a national Algeria. If I were a Christian, I would say that its survival, despite all attempts to exterminate it, is a miracle. Cavaignac, one of the conquering generals, had to acknowledge this refusal to abdicate: "A nation never loses its independence without regret. Resistance is in its every thought."

For fifteen years, from 1832 to 1847, the Emir Abdel Kader and Ben Salem, his representative in Kabylia, were the soul of this resistance. While conducting war, the Emir laid the basis for a modern state, divided his territory into administrative units, assembled an army, levied taxes. An expeditionary force of more than 100,000 men was required to put an end to this great patriot, powerfully supported by the entire people.

In March, 1871, as a consequence of the French defeat of that year, there was a new outburst. Led by El Mokrani, the Kabylia rose with the hope of regaining independence. This was perhaps the greatest insurrection ever to shake Algeria. For ten months a pitiless struggle took place on the very terrain of the present war; this time also more than 100,000 men had to be used to master the revolt.

But the Algerian nation did not die in the consciousness of the people. It continued silently and underground, to surge forth after the First World War under the Emir Khaled, grandson of Abdel Kader. Afterwards, it was the Ulemas who, under the impulsion of two great spiritual leaders, Sheikh Ben Badis and his successor, Sheikh Brahimi, continued to awaken the Algerian people.

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A DEMAND for independence must have not only a spiritual but also a political expression. Such was the task of the movement founded in 1926 by Messali Hadj. In 1933 this movement placed at the center of its program the demand for the creation of an Algerian parliament elected by universal suffrage without distinction as to race or religion. In 1936, before 10,000 listeners in Algiers, it launched the slogan: *an independent Algeria.* At the time, this objective was considered by some people to be phantasmagoric. Within the Algerian élite many persisted in putting the accent on assimilation. Today, with an honesty which does honor, they recognize their error.

The movement was dissolved many times: in 1929, in 1934, in 1937, alas, under the Popular Front, in 1939 and, most recently, at the end of 1954 by M. Mitterand. But each time it succeeded in reconstituting itself. Its founder, Messali Hadj, has spent almost ten years in captivity. Successively came banishments, house arrests in Niort and Angoulême, etc. It is a duty for all of us to recall the historic service this movement and its founder have rendered to the cause of Algerian emancipation. Without them the different currents which go to make up the present Resistance, now carrying on the same struggle and victims of the same repression, would not be what they are.

The Algerian nation is on the march!

7. ISLAM: PORTRAIT OF AN INTELLECTUAL

Edouard Roditi

Not only are the people of Algeria underemployed and undernourished, but they are frustrated in almost every attempt to escape as individuals from the dismal fate of idleness. Like the conquered Poles in Hitler's Germanic Empire, the Mohammedans of Algeria seem to be systematically denied any education or training in the skills of Western technology; they have practically no Arabic schools of their own or Arabic press, but at the same time so few French schools, especially in the inland mountainous areas, that they are deprived of almost every opportunity to acquire French culture as an alternative to Arab culture.

The result of such a situation is that a very limited class of privileged Moslem stooges, known in Algiers slang as the Benoui-oui or "sons of yes-yes," acquires a French education and becomes associated with the French in exploiting the population. Only from time to time does an Arab with a thoroughly French education have enough character and idealism to escape this moral and intellectual degradation and to risk his freedom and perhaps his life in behalf of his less privileged coreligionists. Of such political leaders, Algeria has already had a few in recent years; now it also has an intellectual leader who has developed in French a philosophy of

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colonialism that explains it primarily in terms of the weaknesses of a Moslem order which failed to achieve its own proclaimed social aims and allowed itself to become what Malek Bennabi, the theologian and philosopher who is the author of this remarkable work, calls "colonizable."

"It is evidently more difficult," writes Bennabi in *Vocation de l'Islam,* recently published in Paris by *Editions du Seuil,* "to understand or to form the human being who will be typical of a given civilization than to put together an engine or to train a monkey to wear a necktie." Malek Bennabi's other published works include a regionalist novel, an essay interpreting the social philosophy of the Koran, and a pamphlet discussing the conditions for a rebirth of Algeria political and cultural life. One of his basic tenets—he is not a Marxist—is that "the moral sciences, that is to say the social and psychological sciences, are now far more necessary than the sciences of the material world."

In a detailed analysis of the beliefs and social structure of Islam since the end of the Almohad dynasty of Caliphs in the late Middle Ages, Bennabi then goes ahead to define the causes and symptoms of the paralysis which has made it possible for almost all of the Moslem world to be conquered and exploited by descendants of peoples who, five centuries earlier, had been dazzled by the technical skills of the powerful and prosperous empire of these Calphis.

Bennabi condemns, above all, post-Almohadian Islam's indifference to social justice, which encouraged a fatalistic passivity in the masses that it exploited, preparing them to accept colonialism as a lesser evil. In his historical analysis Bennabi bases many of his arguments on striking passages in the writings of Ibn Khaldoun, an Arab philosopher of the late Middle Ages who seems to have heralded, with his idealistic theory of history interpreted in terms of recurring cycles, much that Vico, Michelet, Hegel, Croce and Spengler subsequently formulated as an improvement on eighteenth-century Cartesianism's more simple doctrines of progress. As opposed to classical Marxism, all these non-materialist philosophies of history have one characteristic in common, their tendency to seek an immanent reason to explain or determine why empires rise and fall.

Among the main characteristics of "post-Almohadian" thought, Bennabi notes a somewhat Byzantine *litteralism* which made many Moslem thinkers lose interest in seeking truths because of the fascination that sheer argument now exerted on them: "One no longer listens to one's rival in an argument, but lets a veritable verbal deluge loose upon him." This kind of rhetorical jousting which is known in Arabic schools as *moudjadala,* Bennabi feels, is "all the more harmful because founded on a truly insane love of words."

In his analysis of the policies of cultural assimilation which some colonial powers impose on their dependent territories, Bennabi is particularly critical of their attempt to shift "from the sacred to the profane without stopping at the sublime, from the Islamic *'llm* (doctrine) to an up-to-date schooling without pausing to consider the notion of culture." The cynical, hedonistic, confused and anti-social North-African thieves, receivers of

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stolen goods, dope-peddlers, pimps and male prostitutes who now constitute an "Arab problem" for the Paris police in certain Montmartre and Left-Bank cafés, are typical examples of the kind of desperate hooliganism that such policies must inevitably produce, if only as a by-product of a hasty and superficial assimilationism.

FROM THE POLITICAL LIFE of Indonesia, Pakistan, Iran, the Arab nations of the Middle East, Egypt and even Turkey, one might quote many examples of "the composite mixture of unsifted anachronisms and unfiltered anticipations" that have characterized the awakening of the sleeping beauty of Islam. But these tensions and conflicts are particularly instructive if one studies them in the light of a theory such as Bennabi's, which takes into account the spiritual heritage of Islam too, instead of concentrating on a few economic and political commonplaces. He cites, for instance, the war against Israel as a striking example of the typically Moslem "complex of the easy job," and concludes that the Arab nations experienced there a salutary and instructive defeat which should now help them recover from "the divorce between thought and action" and the need to flaunt "a better appearance" rather than "a better state of affairs" which is so typical, he feels, of post-Almohadian Islam.

On the one hand, he accuses traditional Islam of being vain in its belief that the Mohammedan ideal need not be improved upon because it is utterly and forever perfect; on the other hand, he accuses it also of a kind of defeatism that, especially in Algeria, discourages any Moslem initiative to solve, with the means that are still available to it, those problems of public health, public education and public welfare that have now become so horribly pressing. On this issue, Bennabi quotes, with an admiration that is rare in a Mohammedan and strikingly proves his good faith, the example of Jewish self-help which functioned even as a clandestine organization under Nazi terror; and he concludes that Mohammedans can "obtain a real liberation only if they themselves prepare the technical basis for it."

In his summing up, Bennabi condemns the totalitarian nature both of post-Almohadian Islam, which turned out to be completely "colonizable," and also the traditional colonial imperialism which has survived, after its defeat in Indonesia and Indochina, in French North Africa, in Kenya and in Madagascar. Quite properly, he protests that present legislation and graft make it easier to obtain permission to open a gaming-house, a house of prostitution or a bar in Algeria, where the Mohammedan majority is forbidden by its faith to drink any alcoholic beverages, than to establish a school for the teaching of the Koran. He concludes that "Islamic paralysis tends towards apathy, but the paralysis of the Western World produces on the contrary convulsions and fits of insane howling."

LIKE THE SOUTH AFRICAN Negro novelist Peter Abrahams, Malek Bennabi views the oppressors of his people with the pity that all sinners deserve in the eyes of the truly good man. Since Jacques Maritain, Karl Barth, Paul Tillich and Martin Buber, we have known, in the West, a number of religious leaders who have at-

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tempted to breathe into the dry bones of Christianity, whether Catholic, Greek Orthodox or Protestant, and of Judaism, some new life and a spark of the idealism that centuries of formalism or of rationalism had suffocated.

For the Islamic faith, Malek Bennabi's book represents an analogous development, one that transcends all the mere opportunism of pan-Arab or pan-Islamic politics. Bennabi believes that the latter are "as obsolete as the pan-Europeanism which some people try to impose in Strasbourg," and inclines to expect a rebirth of Islam in Pakistan or in Indonesia rather than in any of the Arab nations.

As the first North African disciple of Sir Mohammed Iqbal, who was for Pakistan what Mahatma Gandhi was for India, Bennabi has formulated a

(*Please turn the page*)

"These Bands . . ."

In Algeria, as you know, we are first of all confronted by a few terrorist groups having no permanent existence and whose very limited effective forces can hardly be evaluated with any preciseness. But there are also relatively organized and well-staffed bands who engage in guerrilla activities or collective terrorism.

It is these bands that form our main adversary. Their number and structure are constantly changing. However, they have now been localized. We know most of their leaders and we know about their armament, the number of their effective forces and how they change. For the whole of Algeria, these forces are presently around 12,000 to 15,000 men with arms.

—Premier Guy Mollet, interview in *Jours de France,* May, 1956

Algeria is a Nation

Habid Bourguiba*

THE NORTH AFRICAN peoples have a common destiny. In Tunisia, after the arrest of the Chenik government came oppression, with all its violence. After the assassination of my friends Ferhat Hached and Hedi Chaker, there was virtually war. In Morocco, deposition of the Sultan engendered terror and counter-terror.

But in both nations the ordeal by force gave way to negotiations; in both cases, a free confrontation made it possible for France to realize it had everything to gain by recognizing the legitimate aspirations of people in revolt. Beyond these crimes and struggles and by way of negotiation a Franco-Tunisian and, no doubt, a Franco-Moroccan friendship have been formed which will prove to be more lasting than any protectorate system.

The most significant drama in the world today is taking place in Algeria. Blood no longer flows in Korea, Indochina or Tunisia; peace is at hand in Morocco. But in Algeria war is raging. Because of this fact, the painfully erected scafolds in Tunisia and Morocco still are unstable and precarious. They run the risk of collapsing, whereas peace with the Maghreb would inspire a new era in which France's legitimate influence would replace an inacceptable colonial régime.

For peace to come and a true Franco-Algerian friendship to be born France must begin by recognizing the facts. France, taking into account Algerian national feeling, must recognize that Algeria is a nation and that this nation must decide its own fate.

* President of the Tunisian nationalist movement, *Néo-Destour,* and premier of the new independent Tunisian government.

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philosophy which, from Tunis to Marrakech, has already gained an enthusiastic hearing among many of North African Islam's more thoughtful leaders. His followers are those younger men who are no longer content with the solution offered them by Communist or pan-Arab propagandists, and who in the midst of the painful birth of the Mahgreb nations are seeking a doctrine that will prevent them from sinking into the sloth that characterizes so large a part of the Islamic world.

8. IS A SOLUTION POSSIBLE FOR ALGERIA?

Jean Rous

No matter how one examines the Algerian problem it has clearly become so serious that, as in the case of Vietnam, a *political* solution must now take precedence over any other.

There is no longer any need to prove the connection between the French and Algerian crises; the French government has admitted as much. Nor is there any need to repeat that the deteriorating Algerian situation contaminates the whole of North Africa. Bourguiba, for Tunisia and Mohammed V, for Morocco, have both stated frequently enough that the stability of their newly independent régimes depends on re-establishment of peace in Algeria.

Never have there been so many detailed surveys made of Algeria's economic, social and demographic situation as now. Everyone now knows that the Algerian population increases by 250,000 annually, that 2,000,000 school-age children roam the streets, that a majority of the population is under 20, that the living standards of the *fellahin* who form the bulk of the Algerian Moslems averages one-tenth that of the French, that there are 1,000,000 unemployed . . .

The cause of this drama is also political. The insurrection is the product of suppression of freedom of press and assembly, systematic rigging of elections, prescription of all nationalist activities as constituting a conspiracy against the State.

The repression and subsequent dissolution of the only mass nationalist movement, the MTLD (Movement for Democratic Liberties), explains the present situation with respect to authorized spokesmen for the Algerians. Deprived of any legal road to winning their emancipation, a group of young nationalists launched the rebellion. (Egyptian support only came afterwards.) With no other solution discernible and a majority of the responsible militants in jail, the situation deteriorated to such a point that the *maquis* became the only pole of attraction.

Political rivalries which already existed within the MTLD and had produced a split between the supporters and opponents of Messali Hadj

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were carried over into the military struggle. Thus we have seen a kind of competition unknown in the case of Tunisia or even Morocco as to who is entitled to speak in the name of Algerian nationalism. The first insurrectionists founded the National Liberation Front and have succeeded now in associating with it the moderate tendencies of Ferrhat Abbas' UDMA (Algerian Democratic Manifesto group), the so-called Group of 61, the Moslem Ulemas and a minority of the former MTLD. The majority of the former MTLD, under the leadership of Messali Hadj, has continued as the MNA (Algerian National Movement). Despite their differences, these tendencies unanimously demand the recognition of Algeria as a nation.

DURING THE LAST electoral campaign in France both the Republic Front of Pierre Mendès-France and the Socialist Party seemed aware of this situation and of the urgent need for a political solution capable of bringing about peace. At the Socialist Party convention of Puteaux, prior to the formation of the Mollet government, a solution —or rather, a preliminary solution—was proposed and, with this understanding, was adopted by all. Following a report given by Oreste Rosenfeld, the Seine Federation of the Socialist Party proposed that the fact of an Algerian nation and its right to self-determination be recognized as the first essential condition for negotiations.

However, since this viewpoint was opposed by Guy Mollet, who was already scheduled to be the next Premier, as well as by other party federations, it seemed more desirable to find a compromise. Hence, the following position was finally adopted by the convention: (1) the idea of integration with France is outmoded; (2) the existence of an Algerian entity is recognized, its nature and form to be determined by a free referendum; (3) this referendum, so as to select valid spokesmen, would be based upon single lists (no racial separation) and universal suffrage under the control of representatives of all the political organizations. Prior to that, the old Algerian assembly would be dissolved and esssential freedoms restored.

At the time this position was adopted, it undoubtedly had a good chance of being accepted as a basis for negotiations by the different elements of the Algerian resistance movement. The two principal Algerian nationalist movements—the MNA of Messali Hadj and the Liberation Front—were in agreement about the one preliminary condition: recognition of the Algerian people's right of self-determination, to be realized through single list elections to a Constituent Assembly which would negotiate with France.

It was therefore possible to hope that an understanding would be reached. But it was equally evident that it was up to the newly installed Republican Front government to show by its attitude and its acts that such indeed was the road it intended to follow. There was no excuse left for self-delusion: the Algerian climate was more and more

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charged with impassioned elements comparable to those found in religious wars . . .

On February 3 a new development occurred on the Moslem side, one which was bound to show clearly how difficult would be the task of *rapprochement* and negotiation. *Le Monde* made public a proposal of the National Liberation Front implying an important strategic change. This movement went over from a comparatively moderate position (which had won support from a section of the Moslem bourgeoisie and the French left) to one of intransigience: preliminary recognition of independence, negotiations only with the Front and dropping of the idea of preliminary elections. Under these circumstances, and if this declaration was to be taken at its face value, the chances of success—at least with this spokesman for Algerian nationalism—became, at the least, doubtful unless the Front was granted a monopoly in the negotiations from the start. Nevertheless, well informed persons reassured us, rightly or wrongly, "It's just a matter of tactics, a simple reaction on their part. But if we show them by our actions that we really want to follow the road laid down by the Socialist convention, we shall surely be able to hold talks."

Unfortunately, everything that has taken place since then is as if deliberately calculated, in the actions of both parties, to destroy the already tenuous conditions requisite for such a dialogue. As a matter of fact, the bridges have been burned and, for the time being, discussions are impossible . . .

[At this point, Jean Rous outlines the course of events which have made negotiations out of the question, for the moment, and which may be summarized briefly: Premier Mollet's now famous trip to Algeria when he first took office proved far more assuring to the colonists than to the Algerians who, consequently, hardened their attitude. Mollet denied the existence of an "Algerian nation" despite the evidence of a *collective will* on the part of millions of Moslems for nationhood. Messali Hadj proposed an open conference to arrange a cease-fire, but was rebuffed by Mollet's demand, interpreted as an ultimatum by the Algerians, that any discussions must be preceded by a surrender of arms. French and Algerian moderates both reminded Mollet that, in the case of Tunisia, a cease-fire appeal was accompanied by a political amnesty and precise guarantees. In the end, both sides and all factions faced one another from entrenched and inflexible positions.—Ed.]

CAN SOMETHING still be done to prevent the war from spreading? We must clearly recognize that the Algerian war may lead to massacres so horrible that they could provoke not only a general North African uprising but foreign intervention. The Vietnam adventure should have served as a rehearsal and shown how much better it is to consent beforehand to what must eventually be accepted amid ruins and shambles. True, foreign intrigues of unequal weight (Cairo, Washington, Moscow) lie in wait to take France's place and to profit from the agony of old colonialism. But such intrigues would be of little

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effect if all traces of the old colonialism were wiped out through an energetic political counterattack.

In Morocco and Tunisia the foundations for a successful policy have been laid. With independence as a starting point, interdependence is being freely negotiated. Unless the Algerian contagion strikes this undertaking it may well prove to be effective. But what would be the equivalent of such a solution for Algeria?

First of all, since misunderstanding and confusion have become worse, it seems impossible to temporize any longer in the antechambers of a solution. That mutual confidence which would allow proof of the Algerian national reality by elections no longer exists. An act stripped of any equivocation is called for: *the solemn recognition of Algeria as a national entity.* Better to recognize this fact before than after the war! This signifies that all the known and existing tendencies of the 8 million Moslems (Group of the 61; Ulemas; UDMA, National Liberation Front, MNA, etc.) express a kind of unanimous national consciousness summed up in the demand for an Algerian nation. It serves no purpose to say that this nation doesn't exist if a collective will asserts the contrary. Anyone who has really taken note of such an irreversible phenomenon can only conclude: (1) Better that this nation build itself up in peace together with France than in war against her; (2) Everything must be done to assure a place for the French element in this structure and to maintain the strongest possible ties between this nation and France.

Furthermore, "Algeria as a national reality" is a formula which is sufficiently general to provide a base for negotiations during the course of which any and all proposals become possible: autonomy within a federal system, independence, a national statute for the French minority, etc. Algeria as a national reality does not necessarily mean the same thing as a Moslem nation. The right of self-determination for 8 million Moslems cannot be considered apart from the right of self-determination for 1,200,000 French . . .

Just because of these handicaps and the present relation of forces, recognition of the Algerian nation, if it takes place in time, could bring about negotiations in which an Algerian state, connected with France and including a French minority, would result.

In reality, things are more complex. Many Frenchmen in Algeria are afraid and seek a reasonable solution. They want to be Algerians without at the same time ceasing to be French. To negotiate a national minority statute for them and with them is not out of the question. In any case, the political objectives of democratic France must be perfectly clear since we know that in struggles of this kind real strength is, more than anything else, political. The will to negotiate is not a sign of weakness but of assurance. Political positions and proposals must constantly be put forward. If intransigence and fanaticism are run into, then care must be taken not to push everyone into the arms of the fanatics through a policy of senseless repression.

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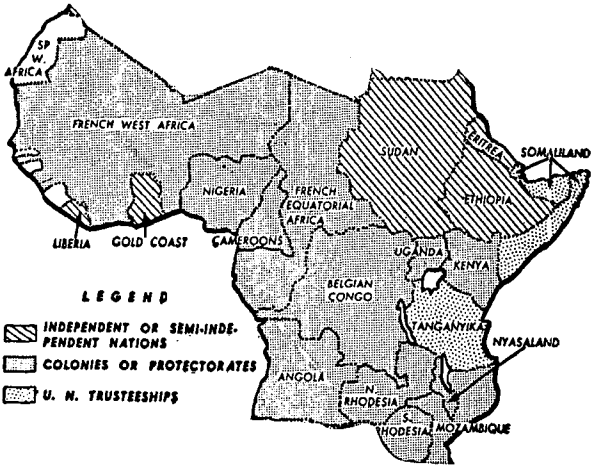

FROM THE TRIBE TO THE TOWN

William J. Newman

Africa is a figment of the white man's fears. Actually, there is no political, economic or social unit which can be called Africa; there is only a collection of colonial areas, emerging states, tribal divisions, towns, villages, cities. Even as a geographical expression there is only diversity; Middle Africa south of the Sahara and north of the Union of South Africa presents varieties of geography which extend far beyond the classic conception of Africa as jungle. Within Middle Africa five states govern: Portugal, France, Belgium, Ethiopia, and Liberia. Africa, south of the Sahara and north of the Union, is not a unit today; even the communication marvels of the white man cannot overcome the brute facts of African variety.

I. *Who is the African?*

Like Africa, there is no African. Instead, there is a conglomeration of tribal members, town people, and those half-way between town society and tribal society. The African—to use the traditional abstraction—today is still primarily a villager who lives off subsistence agriculture and gains his social sustenance from a traditional system. Although the impact of the West is beginning to shatter the tribal systems which previously existed in Middle Africa, it remains true that in one or another form tribalism is still the dominant fact of African life. Ideally the tribal African is born into his age group within the tribe and progresses through maturity to old age within the structure of the tribe. The tribe—ideally again—provides him with a

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self-contained existence that is consistent with itself, and in which each of the parts—economic, social, religious, political—mesh together to form a unique mode of existence for each tribe. The individual is nothing without this tribal world; and the very fact of its uniqueness creates the intense feeling of uprootedness which the individual experiences when he is forced to leave it.

This is the traditional content of tribalism in most of Middle Africa. For tribalism is still the norm of life not only for those Africans who continue to live in the tribal units scattered over this part of Africa but also for those who have moved to the towns of the area. And since the tribe is a unique thing wherever it is found, the varieties of tribalism range from the disrupted tribes of Southern Rhodesia, where the cohesion of tribal life was broken by invasion in the early 20th century, to the tightly knit monarchical tribalism of the Uganda, who are powerful enough to influence British colonial decisions. The Buganda of Uganda present one form of tribalism with their king ruling alongside an aristocracy based on land and cheap labor from neighboring areas. Other tribal units are loosely based on village life and their only political groupings are in terms of an extended family system. The Kikuyu of Kenya are an example of such a segmental tribalism and one which never developed a form of government beyond the council of elders.

For most Africans the tribe is still the "home" from which they may wander but to which they intend to return. This is so much the case that if they do not return they find themselves without a "home," without the kinship and moral framework which only the tribe can provide. In the Copperbelt, for example, the mine workers are in a constante state of movement between their tribes and the towns. The tribal chiefs have even been urged by the mining companies to visit those of their members who live in the mining compounds. Leaving the tribe to go to the town or the mine is not parallel to the country bumpkin in the United States going to the Big City to earn a living. The country bumpkin is moving *within* his civilization: the African is moving *outside* his civilization.

Thus the crisis in the African "soul." The fact that tribalism is a norm means that a conservative, traditional and "backward" institution retains a hold on the new town African, while for the older town African who may have acquired the sophistication of the town it has the symbolic significance of a cutting of roots, a killing of his past. The town African who means to stay in the town and make his way has not only to fight against the foreign ways of town life but also against himself and his tribal past. It was the failure of so many Kikuyu to achieve this metamorphosis that underlay the Mau Mau; the ironical aspect of that movement was the fact that the leadership was the semi-Christianized, semi-town dwelling members of the tribe who never quite jumped the gap between tribe and town.

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Yet the African is amazing in his adaptability, and the Mau Mau is indeed the exception to the rule that the African can in fact adjust to town life. In all parts of Middle Africa he has taken to town life with a rapidity that is disconcerting. Especially on the West Coast, the African has become a worker (in the western sense of the term), a lawyer (many of them; too many), a politician (both wardheeler and otherwise) and whatever else the town has to offer. Within one generation he can move from a tribe to giving orders to British civil servants. And consequently the class divisions which are found in a European industrial city are also found within these African towns. It is these class divisions which are competing--on the West Coast especially—with tribal divisions for loyalty in the political arena. In fact both coincide and operate at the same time, as in the Gold Coast where the tribal loyalty of the Ashanti is combined with an economic class grievance which acts as a catalytic agent for a tribal movement against Nkrumah. The same is true of the African Copperbelt worker; he has organized himself into a trade union which cuts across tribal lines and faces the employer in the Marxist stance—this, while he receives the visits of his tribal chief.

II. *What Are the Needs of the African? What Does He Want?*

The African's needs go beyond the simple formulas of "economic development" but they start with that. In some areas he needs *land.* It is not a question of starvation—widespread famine is a rarity in Africa—but rather of enfeebling diets, low living standards and unprogressive farming which cannot support the future increases in population which European health measures will make possible. But over the continent as a whole the problem of land shortage is not a pressing one. Rather the problem is that of *land use.* For the productivity of the land is restricted by the inadequate methods of traditional farming. While it should not be assumed too quickly that the peasant in Middle Africa is always an inefficient farmer, it is nevertheless true that his techniques are based upon traditional methods of farming. If these methods were adequate for old Africa, they are not adequate for the expanding market economy which the Europeans brought with them and for the support of an increasing town population.

Yet the obvious solution of better land use through education creates more problems than it solves. This was the discovery of the recent report of the East Africa Royal Commission which faced these problems of land use as they exist within the territories of Uganda, Tanganyika and Kenya. Finding the area to be one in which poverty was due to lack of adequate resources, soil and rainfall, the Commission recognized that whatever economic expansion has occurred and would occur depended upon the coming of outside capital. Yet it is precisely the contact of this dynamic external force with the indigenous traditional institutions of the African which have created and will create social tensions.

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> The dilemma which thus confronted official policy lay in the fact that the desire to protect the African against the impact of modern influences conflicted with the desire to create the new income which alone could make possible a rise in his living standards. The African, from a different angle, was confronted by a similar dilemma. His newly aroused desire for progress involved an active participation in the modern exchange economy but that in turn, conflicted with his desire to retain his traditional sense of security and stability. To remain in, or to revert to, a subsistence economy on the traditional lines was increasingly impossible for growing populations competing for limited areas of fertile land. But it was equally impossible to make progress without modifying, and in some cases abandoning, many of the most important features of the tribal system. Prominent among those features of the tribal system which called for revision were the customary forms of land tenure. (*East Africa Royal Commission Report,* 1953-1955, p. 391.)

It is a paradox that the only way to break through this dilemma of economic development vs. social welfare is to make it possible for the African to move from the tribal way of life to a national way of life as fast as possible. For, by creating an independent nation and thereby giving the African control over its economic life, social welfare can be made to come out of the brute facts of economic development. An increase, say, in cocoa production is economic development, but if it breaks up an old society it does not necessarily put a new society in its place. That can only be done when the *nation* takes the place of the tribe. It is imperative, therefore, to speed the growth of a new society if the fruits of economic development are to be retained.

It is the African's recognition of this fact that makes him demand *equality* and *power* as his primary need. If he is to be western man with western man's ethos of individualism and competitiveness, then let him possess what goes along with that creed—equal rights. If he is to live in an urban town instead of a tribal village, he must not only wear the clothes of the west, but he must have the political privileges of the west—a vote. The economic problem leads by a direct line of reasoning to the political problem: the one cannot be solved without the other and they represent to the African mind one problem, not two problems. When he is told by a Colonial Office to be patient, to develop his economic abilities so he can later on become a citizen in the western mold, the African's response is negative to say the least. Justifiably. He is being asked to give up not just an inefficient system of production but a whole system of values; in return he wants not only to be made into economic man but into a new man, he wants at least on the surface, to be modernized.

These problems created by this demand for equality are more acute in some parts of Middle Africa than in others. In Kenya, Tanganyika, and central Africa they are at their most intense because of the poverty of the land and because the white settler is most resistant to the demands of the African for equality. In Belgian Africa the problem is met by administrative fiat which attempts to control the social and

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political development of the Africa. Whatever institutional political development exists in Belgian Africa is strictly limited. There is a road for economic advancement which leads to a controlled African economic elite. But this elite is not supposed to have political thoughts. In French Africa it is met by the political fiction that the French Revolution is still the sovereign remedy—provided that the African becomes French. In the west coast of British Africa the problem is finding its best solution due to the relative prosperity of the area, the lack of settlers, and the consequent willingness of the British civil servant to move on. But what the African needs and wants is everywhere the same: economic development and political equality *at the same time.*

III. *How is the African Trying to Fulfill His Needs?*

When the African leaves his tribal system to become an economic man, he is leaving a system which provides him not only with sustenance but with a form of government. Yet economic man is by definition not to concern himself with government, only with production. Only the western bourgeois mind could invent such a monstrosity, and the African no more than the western worker is able to accept it. He has to make himself a new home, and that home is to be his nation. But the process of exchanging the tribe for the nation is easier for the anthropologist to say than for the African to do. For politics and government is more than marching up to Government House with a banner: it needs organization, a political movement, and political parties which can govern.

The outcrop of political movements in Africa since the end of the war has posed problems of organization, tactics, and ideology which the African never before had to face. The raw material of the nationalist movement does not lie readily at hand and the organizational problem alone is staggering in its complexity. It is the problem of welding together groups who are as yet *conscious only of themselves,* who have yet to discover their common interests and, most important, are at varying levels of social and economic development. The mere difficulty of communicating with illiterates drives the organizer to unique methods; it also drives him to rely on a personal approach to politics. These are the problems which make it so hard to jump the gap between a political movement struggling against colonialism and a political party that is able to rule on its own. Africa is well supplied with the raw material of revolutionary movements which have a mystique centered around a drive for power. The Africans can whip up an anti-British mob at the drop of a *panga*—and an anti-Nkrumah mob too, as the Gold Coast is discovering. The typical characteristics of political *movements* are found all over the continent: to use Hannah Arendt's typology, the masses in the underfed villages and in the slum-ridden towns; the elite among underemployed lawyers, and poorly paid but school educated government clerks; the mob among those who find in social change the

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chance to display their abilities of leadership and to achieve upward mobility. Africans so far have been fertile in producing political *movements;* they are only beginning to produce a political party which can govern.

Yet the time is coming when they will have to do so or watch government disappear. The British are leaving some parts of Africa, and where they are doing so with great haste, as in the Gold Coast, they are putting the burden on a political movement to change into a political party. The Convention Peoples Party of Nkrumah led the charge against the British in 1948 and it has reaped the reward—power and the questioning of that power by more recent movements. The CPP has shown a marvelous ability to administer the country since it was given virtual control in 1951, but it has yet to be proven that democratic parliamentary government is to be permanent in the Gold Coast. An opposition force, the National Liberation Movement, has arisen not merely to question the right of the CPP to rule but also to question its whole concept of the nature of the state. The NLM is in favor of a federal organization form of government and between this idea and Nkrumah's belief in a strong centralized unitary state there is not much in common. Nkrumah thinks in terms of a strong centralized state because the bureaucracy of such a state is the quickest way to bring a modern economy to the Gold Coast. No one can dispute that assertion, but the Ashanti claim there are other values to be considered, namely, local autonomy.

Nigeria presents a similar conflict between localism and centralism. The "National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons" of Azikiwe and the "Action Group" of Awolowo are the two strongest parties in each of their respective regions of Nigeria, the eastern and western, while a third party, the Northern Peoples Party, is as solidly based on the less developed north. So intense is this regional factionalism that the British, with the compliance of these three parties, have been forced to move away from the centralized constitution which they had set up in 1946 towards a looser federal constitution. Again, these parties show all the characteristics of political movements and each is so dominant

Older Brother or Big Brother?

"Am I to treat the black man as my equal or as my inferior? I must show him that I can respect the dignity of human personality in everyone, and the essential thing is that there shall be a real feeling of brotherliness. How far this is to find complete expression in the sayings and doings of daily life must be settled by circumstances.. The Negro is a child, and with children nothing can be done without the use of authority. We must, therefore, so arrange the circumstances of daily life that my natural authority can find expression.. With regard to the Negroes, then, I have coined the formula: 'I am your brother, it is true, but your elder brother'."

—Dr. Albert Schweitzer

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in its own area that none has an effective regional opposition to face; hence their willingness to see their vision of a greater Nigeria go by the board while they reach for local power.

Still, there is no reason to doubt the ability of the African of British West Africa to develop a democratically run state with its usual paraphernalia of parties and parliaments; the transition from movement to party will be difficult and not without its disharmony but the African in this area has shown his ability at political negotiation and compromise. The same result is more in doubt among the African nationalist parties of British Central and East Africa. Here, where the white minority is in control, the attempts of the Africans to organize their protests and desires in a political framework face a cruel dilemma which demands an answer, and quickly. The dilemma concerns the choice of political means to the end of self-government and democracy. It is whether to accept the constitutional framework established by the British and try to work within it in the hope that power will eventually go to the numerical majority (i.e., the African); or whether to become a revolutionary movement designed to take power, establish a representative system of government, and create a black state in which, at best, the whites would be tolerated, at worst, ejected.

To state the dilemma is to indicate its futility. The evolution of the established governments which have been erected by the British in settler-dominated Kenya and in the new Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland towards true numerical representation is going to take a very long time; there is no reason as of this moment to believe that the settler will ever allow it to take place in that form. The most that can be expected is a development, more or less swift depending on circumstances, toward a selective franchise giving the vote to Africans who have passed certain educational and financial tests. Whether that will satisfy these nationalistic movements and groups is for them to decide. But it will certainly not be what they are asking for today: self government. The other alternative is no more appealing; the British have the guns and the settler will fight back with all the fury of an outraged racialist and with all the resources of the British government. Revolution will almost of necessity take on the bloody face of a Mau Mau and the idea of democratic self-government will go down the drain.

The Northern Rhodesia African Congress and the Nyasaland African Congress have faced such a dilemma since these two states were included in a Federation dominated by the white settler. The federation of Northern Rhodesia with Southern Rhodesia was a blow to their hopes of achieving self-government and democracy. In Southern Rhodesia the whites are in control and their native policy trembles on the edge of *apartheid;* the African has no possibility of asserting himself. The Northern Rhodesian African could only see such a Federation as an extension—an aggression, if you will—of the influence of the settler to an area where previously the British administration had held out

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some hope of democracy. Thus the peculiar situation in 1949 and after, of the African in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland begging the British to keep them under the protection of Her Majesty's Government in London. This sudden rush of loyalty to the British Government signifies that the problem of the African political movement in these areas is not so much that of the British Government or how to get rid of it, but that of the settler with his economic tie to the land, his racial view of the future, and his insistence that he shall rule till the African "grows up."

IV. *Is There No Way Out?*

Like most dilemmas this one is too sharp to be real. The African has shown that he has patience and he is showing it again. The British administration is willing to make timid offers to the nationalists which may temporarily mollify them. Such, for example, is the recent Coutts proposal for Kenya allowing the direct election of the six African representatives to the Kenya legislature who are now nominated by the British administration. But there is to be no common electoral roll or Kenya-wide African parties. The British move, but all too slowly. Before they meet one crisis, conditions change and another is on top of them. The establishment of true multi-racial politics where the vote is for the man instead of a race is far in the future—if indeed, it is in the future.

Fortunately man is not quite a logical animal and these logical dilemmas do not prevent one from hoping that he can bungle his way to an illogical solution. Social forces at work in all the territories of Africa may help. For the African *is* in fact "growing up," much to the surprise and often the dismay of the white man. He is becoming educated; he is becoming a technician; he is becoming a town dweller; he is becoming Christian; in short, a good bourgeois. The middle class African—though not always middle class to the core—is the most recent social phenomena in Africa; he is both a problem and a hope. If he earns money as a white man does, and dresses in a white man's clothes and rides and talks like a white man he expects to be treated as a white man. This was what he was told, wasn't it? But where the settler lives he is not treated as a white man. On the other hand, the fact that he is serving a technological and professional function even in the settler-dominated territories may provide a basis for class distinctions which can replace racial distinction.

The same replacement of racial by class distinctions is beginning in the territories where African trade unions have become established, especially on the Copperbelt. Here a well organized African trade union movement has won a place for itself; management is willing to bargain with it, and a purely economic relationship has been established. But alas! with the white man's union there is not a purely economic relationship. In a recent conflict in the Copperbelt it was the white man's trade union which fought bitterly against any form of

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African advancement and management which fought to secure some measure of advancement. Economic interest operated on all three sides, but no one can deny that the Copperbelt workers are divided by more than than economic interest. Yet, when the chips were down, the white worker admitted that some measure of African advancement should be permitted. Whether this was a Pyrrhic victory is yet to be seen; it certainly does not mean that the white worker has accepted the African worker as his equal, as a member, a brother, of the same class.

Class warfare as a solvent of conflict! Yet the economic and social advance of the African *may* gain him the recognition he desires by giving him a role in a class structure. Class warfare may become the milder form of conflict and replace the hatred and bitterness of racial conflict. The African is trying to fulfill his needs in more ways than one, and an effort to become a member of a class is one way at least of losing the stigma of race which the whites have so gratuitously put upon him. And it is a better way than the race war which lies so close to the surface of so many of the nationalist movements.

V. *Where and Who is the Settler?*

The settler creates the most difficult problems. In the west coast where the British are bowing their head for the *coup de grace* there are difficulties of state-building in an undeveloped area, but there is not the poison of racialism which negates the very concept of state-building. In Belgian territory the rigid hand of the mother country excludes politics and is busy ordering a hierarchy of social classes which in theory and to some considerable extent in practice is multi-racial. Most of Middle Africa therefore is not caught in the trap of racialism; but in those areas where the white settler has come, the conflict between white and black is so deep and so tragic that it will affect the future of all of Africa and perhaps of western civilization itself. It is not being overly dramatic to say that in this comparatively small area, Southern and Northern Rhodesia and Kenya, the peoples of the western world see their own civilization face to face with a force they neither understand nor can conquer. The racial prejudice of the white settler in Africa is not the prejudice of a small group of misguided farmers and businessmen; it is a prejudice lying deep within western civilization itself.

The economic role of the white settler is the clue to his importance and self-esteem. He is the farmer who produces whatever surplus wealth is to be found in the area, which is not much. The white man is the businessman, although in Kenya this role is also taken by the Indian. In the Copperbelt he is not only a businessman but a mineworker as well as a farmer; in Southern Rhodesia he is again all three. He is, in short, the main producer of wealth, the most important source of skill and capital, the man who makes policy.

Between the African settler and the American frontiersman, there

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is an interesting though limited parallel. Both committed themselves to life in a particular area and there is no turning back; both acquired a love for their land which was jealous and exclusive. And both suffered from an inferiority complex in their relationship with the metropolis. Frustration and aggressiveness were and are the lot of both. But the settler in Africa faces odds which the American frontiersman never had to face: the odds of a race conflict *he himself has largely created.* And there is no reason to think that as the African becomes more educated, more capable of manipulating the mechanisms of western civilization that this race distinction will fade from the minds of the whites.

The settler has had to face the problem of how to "protect" himself against an expanding African population and for this purpose he has used political techniques of enormous ingenuity. Generally he has forced the British Colonial office to confine membership in the legislative council to the settler community and has pressed for control over the executive council where policy is really made. Up to the Lyttleton constitution of 1954 these aims were most fully achieved in Kenya where the legislative council represented the settler and was increasingly powerful in the formation of government policy. But policy making and executive decision was still in the hands of the Colonial Office which tried to hold a balance between the demands of the settlers and the needs of the Africans. The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland has been more a successful attempt by the settler to dominate the governmental process. Here the whites acquired a sovereign legislative body with no Colonial office check; this new central government ruled three large states and had at its command considerable economic and political power over the whole area.

With such a system politics was kept firmly out of the hands of the Africans and shared between the settler and Colonial Office. There is no reason to be surprised at this state of affairs; the African was having enough trouble trying to run his local affairs by a system of elections within the tribal areas without being concerned with the larger political affairs of the colony. But what *is* shocking is the spirit in which the settler carried out his political domination. It was to his mind the political counterpart of the color bar, a system of discrimination which ran far outside politics and touched every part of life. The White Highlands policy, in which much of the best land of Kenya is reserved to the white settler, is the color bar writ exceedingly large and is so manifestly unjust and unworkable that the East Africa Royal Commission had to recommend that the African have some rights to use this land. But as a means of assuring dominance it cannot be equalled. It is the political and economic embodiment of racialism.

The other technique of dominance is an effort to keep a "natural" monopoly of economic power, education, and skill. This can be found

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in the policy of the white trade unions on the Copperbelt and the refusal of the Southern Rhodesian government to allow any African trade unions at all; in the superior educational facilities offered to white children, and in the economic legislation which, in Southern Rhodesia for example, discriminates against the African producer of agricultural goods. But not much legislation is needed to retain the economic dominance of the settler; he and he alone has access to sources of capital.

VI. *What are the policies of the Colonial Powers?*

In the midst of the struggle between African and settler in East and Central Africa and the struggle between African and African in West Africa, what have the colonial powers to say? For before the British leave West Africa they will have much to do, and they must continue to hold the balance in the settler territories. As for the French and Belgians, they have no intention of leaving at all. The colonial powers have ceased to be the only directors of policy in Africa; but they have not ceased to be a major force in the shaping of economies, social structures and political organisms.

The dilemma of economic development vs. social welfare in a colonial territory has already been described. But if these problems of ends and means as they are found in western Africa are puzzling for a colonial power, what of the problems of a multi-racial colony? Should the British remain to hold the balance? If so, what is this "balance" which they are to hold? Here there is little possibility of leaving at all, for it might mean the unleashing of a racial war. Yet the need to leave is urgent: the resources of the British are not inexhaustable, the problems of governing such areas are increasingly complex and difficult and even here the British are formally dedicated to the creation of new states and nations. Thus, the British have tried to establish the economic and social basis for multi-racial states which can stand alone. They have failed so far in Kenya and success in central Africa is dubious at best, but whatever efforts they have made are along two lines: on the one hand, the amalgamation of various units into federations which will be economically viable, and on the other hand, the propagation of a doctrine of partnership which will lead to racial harmony. The former led to the abortive attempt at an East African Union composed of settler-dominated Kenya, and African-dominated Uganda and Tanganyika in the pre-World War II days. The scheme foundered on the objections of the Buganda to being included in a state with the Kenya settler and the objection of the Kenya settlers to not having sufficient power within Kenya at the time of the proposed federation. All that remains of the attempts at closer union is the post World War II East Africa High Commission which confines itself to technical cooperation and conducts common economic services; it leaves political issues severely alone.

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In central Africa, however, the attempt to create a new state has been more successful. It was more successful because the settler had greater power and the African less power. The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland is the result of the agitation of the settlers for a large state which would give greater economic efficiency by constructing one economic unit where three had existed. One of the results of this federation was to protect the settlers of Northern Rhodesia from the push of the African for self-government. Another result was to protect the English settler from the aggrandizement of the Union of South Africa. But whatever the reasoning of the settler and the British Conservative government which gave them their way, the African sees the establishment of the Federation simply and purely as an attempt to extend the domination of the settler over him; hence his plea to remain under the comparatively benevolent hand of the Colonial Office.

To meet the objections of the Africans, the British government and the settlers' leaders have enunciated the doctrine of partnership. Its meaning is vague and the political intentions behind it are dubious, but presumably it holds the promise that the African shall have a place in the community commensurate with his abilities and a measure of equality. In theory it suggests brotherly love; as practice it smacks of a heavy handed paternalism. Whether it can emerge as a reality out of the contending forces of settler racialism, the African desire for an independent state and the facts of economic dominance and dependence is a question for the future. And a fateful one: this is the last chance for the British settler to establish a successful multi-racial state; if he fails in the Federation he will have failed everywhere in Africa. The die is not yet cast here as it may be in Kenya; but the test of the settlers' intentions may be closer than they expect, and the evidence of the past warrants no great optimism.

"This Crusty Old Bismarck of the Spirit"

"... Dr. Schweitzer has never learned any African language or dialect—except a few words of greeting. . . . As to his attitude toward Africans en masse that is a mixture of benevolence, perplexity, irritation, hope, and despair. He never talks about politics for public expression, but is vociferous privately. I would imagine that he has little if any belief in the capability of Africans—at least in his own area—for self-government. He hates oppression, of course, and believes devoutly in the brotherhood of man, but he has, it seems, almost no conception of the volcanic surges and stresses of modern Africa and its hungry zest for political advance. ... I do not think he has ever encountered or exchanged a word with any contemporary African nationalist. He is, in short, one of those good old souls who would like to see the white man stay on in 'colonial' areas forever." —A Visit to Dr. Albert Schweitzer, from JOHN GUNTHER'S *Inside Africa*

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THE NEW WEST AFRICAN NATIONS

Keith Irvine

Jean Cocteau tells the story of a young governess in a school in pre-revolutionary Russia, who found the task of disciplining her turbulent pupils beyond her powers. She therefore hit upon the expedient of persuading her pupils to draw up their own code of behavior, together with their own rules and punishments—a system which she calculated would reduce her work to a minimum. That night, as she went upstairs on her final rounds, an unaccustomed silence reigned. She was about to congratulate herself on the success of the new method when her train of thought was interrupted by the sight of a lifeless child's body swinging to and fro in the stair well. One of the children had infringed the new rules!

There has been no want of voices to proclaim that the progress of West African states towards self-government will have equally gruesome results. From the dulcet English cadences of Elspeth Huxley to the racially sensationalist expostulations of the South African Stuart Cloete, external commentators have frequently prophesied doom, destruction, human sacrifice, and cannibalism. "The jackdaw continent," Miss Huxley calls Africa, saying that from successive civilizations Africa has "picked out the bits that caught her fancy and built them into a subtle, ruthless and ancient society, cruel as Tamerlane's, which ingenuous foreigners have dismissed as childlike because its material wants are few. The rest has disintegrated, leaving little trace." Even in the writings of less pessimistic authors we find the same questioning note struck, as stress is laid upon the blackness of the past, the promise which lies ahead, and the difficulties besseting the transitional period.

What are the choices before West African society? To the West African the question "Are you for the East or for the West?" hardly seems to apply. Politically introverted, West African emotions center upon the problem of winning emancipation from colonial rule. Therefore the choices which present themselves to the West African arise solely within the context of the present West African reality.

West Africa today is part of Africa where tribalism, although dented, is nevertheless the most firmly established, because it is the most adequately adjusted to such economic demands as the Western world has yet made upon it. The West African tribes may broadly be divided into two types—those who inhabit the savannah lands to the immediate

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South of the Sahara, and those who inhabit the rain forests towards the coast. Among themselves they are inter-related by a complex of religious, political, economic, and traditional allegiances. Upon this composite social mass play external forces from the outside world—sometimes weakening and undermining traditional authority by introducing new concepts which the traditionalists are unable or unwilling to recognise; sometimes recognising and reinforcing the status quo—as, for example, do the British in supporting the Sultans of Northern Nigeria; sometimes—through challenge—stimulating a reassertion of traditionalism, as, for example, in the revival of Ewe and Ashanti nationalism since the Second World War, following the subordination of the interests of these tribes to the exigencies of colonially created state boundaries.

Behind the cartoon stereotype of the indignant African nationalist (an outraged patriot or an irresponsible fanatic, according to the social views of the cartoonist) lie other realities which the American public is, as yet, far from understanding to the extent, for example, that they understand the social structure in Europe. Leaving aside the relatively complex and various societies which the area contains, let us detach for examination those political strata which are the most likely to determine the future values by which West African society will be formed. Three types may be considered.

I

Firstly, the traditional authorities—the chiefs and the "stool families," the aristocrats, the hereditary possessors of power. Although no close parallel is possible with the Kikuyu of East Africa (whose rule is traditionally through "age groups" and not through "chiefs") nevertheless this tribe, in the course of the Mau Mau uprising, has dramatically illustrated the strength of the emotions which African tribal institutions can tap. The custodians of these institutions are these traditional rulers. Though frequently, but not always, lacking ultimate control of such instruments of power as telephones, guns, and railroads, these conservative aristocracies are often able to rely upon a virtually unanimous popular support upheld by the sanctions of race and religion. Though their power is also subject to traditional checks not always noticed by the outsider, this nevertheless gives the traditionalists a weapon that many a Western politico might envy.

Secondly, an equally important section of society—the emergent middle class. For the first time in West African history we find coming to the fore a type of man who has no traditional or religious authority behind him, and who, while Westernized in tastes, and to a great extent in thought, nevertheless rejects both direct Western rule, and also the example of those who, in an earlier generation, patterned themselves too closely on European behavior. Premiers Azikiwe and Nkrumah spring naturally to mind as the best known representatives of this class, although, while being members of it, they by no means typify it.

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Whether or not such men have traveled to Europe or America; whether they are from a well-to-do trading background or of peasant parentage; whether money was lavished on their education or they are mission-school or self-educated—men of this stamp, to whom the future seems bright with promise, speak with the authority of their class, and sometimes (but not perhaps as often as they think) with the true voice of their people. Their job, they perceive, is to modernize their countries, and to give them a voice in the counsels of the nations. Theirs is the task of putting through a middle-class revolution, and of consolidating it, which is to say of supplanting the traditional aristocracy at home, while at the same time frustrating the neo-colonialist plans of various foreign agencies to obtain for themselves a firm economic grip upon the national windpipe.

In view of its strategic significance in the development of world history, it is as well to distinguish a third group, insignificant though it may appear in the present situation—the West African Communists. The role of the West African Communists in contemporary politics may be compared either to that of the foetus or to the appendix—i.e., the importance of the Communists depends upon future developments. At the moment, the West African Communist finds himself swimming against the current contemporary circumstance, and presently may find himself stripped of every identifying characteristic save name and vocabulary. Fundamentally a nationalist, the present Communist, in effect, is either a *bourgeois qui s'ignore* or an aristocrat trying to retain power by adapting to the modern world in this way. With the "bourgeois" it becomes difficult to distinguish between a middle-class misfit and a "loyal" member of the middle class who is using a Marxian vocabulary for its rhetorical effect—Nkrumah used to speak of creating a "Union of West African Soviet Socialist Republics." For some this type of word borrowing will add flavor to Elspeth Huxley's remark about the "jackdaw continent," but in point of fact what we have is a society feeling its way forward in unprecedented circumstances, and picking out those words and ideas which feel like useful tools, equally regardless of their original context and of their possible associations for outsiders.

For there will be no communism (as we understand the word) in Africa for decades, if indeed ever. Even should, by some hitherto unrevealed chain of events, West Africa fall within the Communist zone of power, or should West African leaders contract treaties and alliances with Communist heads of state, West Africans as a whole are no more spontaneously "going Communist" than they are going spontaneously to become Episcopalians. The African South Africans might conceivably evolve a communistic form of state; by themselves and under present conditions West Africans will not. Land tenure which is already communitarian in character; the absence of white settlers; the relative absence of a "race question"; and the existence of a well-developed and

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enthusiastically pursued trading system, with its roots deeply embedded in local custom, are factors which preclude the indigenous development of communism. Even those Communist- trained trade union leaders who return periodically from Soviet countries are more likely ultimately to use their training as a means to personal advancement than to forward the Communist cause. In West Africa it is the age of individualism which is now at hand.

II

The struggle, therefore, becomes limited to that between the traditionalists and the modernizers. Nor is the "new," as we sometimes too readily tend to assume, necessarily the more virtuous of the two. Much of the "new" may be inevitable and must be accepted, but that it will often destroy long-established social harmonies, and that it will engender some of the worst features of Western life, must also be remembered. Upon the exact terms of the victory, therefore, the future happiness of the West African peoples will depend. Here a brief outline of the political conditions prevailing in differing territories will at least permit us to grasp the difficulties of formulating generalizations about the West African future.

Before continuing, however, one point requires clarification. Since the primary instrument of change is now the political state, we must, for the time being, abandon the viewpoint of past and present ethnic reality—which is to say that of the tribal groupings—for the sake of examining West Africa from the standpoint of political administration. While cartographically convenient, this will, of course, imply a certain blurring of detail.

Even here, however, a modicum of historical background is necessary. It should be understood that the European colonial system penetrated Africa by two geographic routes. Over the centuries the sea-going nations established "factories," or trading stations, along the coast. Most of these eventually passed into British hands. In time the hinterland due North of these coastal zones also became British-administered. The British West African colonies, therefore, thrust inland from the coast, like separate fingers. The French, however, sending expeditions due East from their base at the mouth of the Senegal river, claimed the backlands, and also all the "vacant" (sic) littoral between the interstices of the British colonies. The Anglo-French rivalry—long since locked in stalemate in the form of sea versus land power—therefore reproduced its reflection in the establishment of the West African states. Due to the herculean difficulties confronting the French in developing land communications over an area more than half the size of Siberia, it is therefore the British-administered areas, with their ports open as thresholds to the trade and ideas—if not of the world—at least of the British Commonwealth, which have become more advanced.

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Crudely exploited in the early days (*vide* André Gide) and then largely neglected, the lands beneath the tricolor have only within the last decade begun to experience any substantial progress. Problems, therefore, remain local, or else are related to those of French parliamentary politics. An increasing influx of French-speaking European settlers has been flowing into the area of late, bringing, as white settlers in other parts of Africa have done, the threat of future conflict. However, the situation of the French settlers is likely to become increasingly precarious when the North African revolution, now in progress, reaches its political fulfilment with the ending of French rule. Up to now however, in West Africa, French policy has been on the one hand to back settler interests, and on the other to repress African nationalism in such a harsh fashion as to turn the thoughts of local nationalists inevitably towards the East. An example of this is offered by the quasi-Communist uprising in the French-administered U.N. Trust Territory of the Cameroons last year.

In general, however, the vast territories of the A.O.F. (*l'Afrique Occidentale Française*) and the even more neglected expanse of the A.E.F. (*l'Afrique Equatoriale Française*) are difficult to organize politically on any but the most restricted regional basis. Communications, let alone trade, industry, and education are insufficiently developed to permit the inhabitants to establish ultimate control of their own political destinies. In large part Moslemized, reached by vague but stimulating back-currents of change and unrest in other parts of the world, the inhabitants of these lands, so often forgotten by the world, must depend for the form of their future not upon decisions taken in Dakar, Bamako, or Brazzaville, but upon what happens in Cairo, Lagos, and Accra—and yet a further geographic remove—in Washington, Paris, Moscow, and even, perhaps, Peiping. That is to say, the inhabitants of French tropical Africa have the power to refuse or to oppose policies but not yet to initiate them.

III

Separate geographically, the British West African colonies—Nigeria, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, and the tiny Gambia—must also be considered separately. All are committed to self-government, which the Gold Coast and Nigeria may perhaps attain this year, and which Sierra Leone may reach in 1961.

Of the four territories, the Gold Coast is the most advanced. It is also, perhaps, the most archetypal of West African colonies, for within its borders every kind of West African problem may be discerned. The Gold Coast is, of course, entirely a colonial creation, and as such in conflict with underlying ethnic reality. Its boundaries bisect the Ewe tribe in the East, and cut through the linguistic groupings of less consciously united peoples in the West. At the same time the "Gold Coast" yokes together in unwonted peace, if not in concord, the Ashanti,

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Fanti, and Ga peoples, as well as, among others, the totally dissimilar Dagomba, Mamprusi, Gonja and Moshi tribes of the North.

Economically the cocoa-growing Ashanti, who occupy the gold and timber-producing heartland of the colony, are themselves the primary producers, while it is the Fanti, and other tribes of the coast who control the means of distribution to the world market. Traditionalists, with a strongly developed national consciousness, the aggressive Ashanti are a group of tribally disciplined conservatives—keepers of the old African religious values. The Fanti and other coast tribes, on the other hand, are the traditional allies of the west. Yet, while they have often assumed the role of modernizers and democrats, and have thus frequently become the instruments of change and adaptation, it must never be forgotten that at heart they still remain passionate nationalists, and that in no way do they resemble the "black Englishmen" of an earlier generation. Unlike the Ashanti (who speak of throwing a customs barrier round the cocoa-growing area), they direct their allegiance not to any local region, but to the Gold Coast (to be renamed "Ghana") as their nation-state.

Today, therefore, the conflict between Fanti and Ashanti—a century ago being fought out with muskets and cutlasses—has been transferred to the political plane. To know the form the decision would take might be to know the future course of West African history, for it implies many decisions of which it may be considered the sum total. So far the political struggle between "interior" and "coast," of which the NLM (National Liberation Movement) and the CPP (Convention People's Party) have become the respective symbols, is said to have aligned behind the NLM the majority of the traditional rulers; the entire Ashanti tribe and other dependent groups; the disgruntled cocoa farmers of all tribes; and lastly the British gold mining interests and other agents of the British colonial system, seeking any expedient method to defer the imminent independence demanded by the party in power, the CPP. Kwame Nkrumah's CPP, on the other hand, advocating Gold Coast unity and "Self-Government Now," is proving the rallying point for the coastal tribes, traditionally fearful of Ashanti domination, the majority of the African intelligentsia, the official trade unionists, and all those persons African and British—usually government-employed—who are in favor of liquidating colonialism and of substituting governmental responsibility for private economic interest whenever this is necessary—as it is, more often than not, on the West African terrain.

These two respective coalitions, however, are in the nature of "united fronts," and may be fragmented, recombined, or subjected to all the quirks of sudden growth and change that are characteristic of politics in general and West African politics in particular. For example, the British Colonial Office, paradoxically more progressive than the British Foreign Office where African affairs are concerned, is reported to have tried to safeguard the coming Gold Coast independence by at-

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tempting to wean recalcitrant chiefs from the NLM to the CPP camp with offers of salary increases. On the other hand, however, the situation may not change at all, but may harden further, possibly deteriorating into a traditional coast versus interior war in which foreign powers might or might not intervene. Here the issues become so problematic that it is unrewarding to contemplate them further. In the meantime, fresh developments may occur as a result of the vital electoral battle to be fought out later this year.

In Nigeria, as in the Gold Coast, we find the same polarization of interest occurring between the producers of the interior and the distributors of the coastal region. Here, however, the areas and populations involved are considerably larger, and the conflict is accentuated by the fact that the peanut producers of the North are Moslems of Fulani-Hausa blood, whereas the Southerners are Negroes of animist or Christian faith. The Northerners, moreover, are living under the rule of the tradition-directed sultanates, such as that of Sokoto, whereas the Southern society, although here and there subject to traditional authoritarian patterns, is changing over rapidly to democratic forms of government. The situation, however, is further complicated by the division of the coastal region into East and West—the West being largely given over to the Yoruba tribe, who are city-dwelling traditionalists by inclination, whereas their rivals, the Ibo, are an individualistic tribe from the barren lands of the East, living in villages under a more decentralized form of rule. Today it is the Ibo—the most aggressive, the most adaptable, and the most modern-thinking Nigerian tribe—who are bidding to become the rulers of the new Nigeria. Fanning out of the entire area they are everywhere to be found in key technical positions, and are zealously entering commerce, politics, and education. The Ibos, in short, are taking up a position in the van of the emerging Nigerian middle class which will rule at least the Southern part of the country when the day of independence comes, as it is imminently expected to do after the constitutional conference to be held in London in September 1956.

IV

At the American end, as it were, of the West African coastline lie two further adjacent territories—Sierra Leone and Liberia. They provide an interesting comparison, in some respects, as offering alternative prototypes of West African development. Both territories are relatively small in size, both have populations of approximately a million and a half, and both have been endowed with a coastal ruling caste descended from freed slaves who were resettled in Africa—the Americo-Liberians of Monrovia, and the Creoles of Freetown. Both these groups regard the "bush-Africans" of the hinterland as "beyond the pale" in much the same manner as the Anglo-Irish of Dublin once looked down upon the "bog-Irish" of the interior. Both Americo-Lib-

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erians and Creoles have acted as conductors of Western commerce and culture to the tribal territories in which they are situated. In Sierra Leone, however, the Creoles formed a middle class subservient to British colonial rule, whereas in Liberia the Americo-Liberians, nominally independent, have relied ultimately upon American protection and support, just as the Portuguese of Angola and Mozambique have relied ultimately upon the protection of Great Britain.

Since the second world war, however, differences in the two territories have been further accentuated. With the American construction of a deep-water port at Monrovia, and with the American discovery of the richest iron ore deposits in the world at Bomi Hills, Liberia has entered upon a period of economic development for the benefit of foreign interests on the one hand, and internal political repression on the other. In this situation the Liberian True Whig Party (in power since the 1870s) has been playing the classic part that Karl Marx, referring to colonial exploitation in the Far East, assigned to the "comprador" class, by which he meant the major-domo or "native" manager class which, in return for local privileges and a share in the profits as "hush money," could be trusted to supervise and control the local population in the interests of foreign businessmen. In Sierra Leone, however, which has been less stagnant where social progress is concerned, the British Colonial Office policy of granting independence by stages to effect a transition to a democratic state has meant that the Creole majority has been challenged by a new and more numerous middle class recruited from the tribes of the hinterland. Although it may be doubted whether—eventually—even so indubitably African an African as Dr. M. A. S. Margai of the Sierra Leone People's Party will completely satisfy the volatile voters of the Sierra Leone hinterland (who recently rose in armed revolt against taxes and the rising cost of living), there is no doubt that for the time being they will find him acceptable, if only because he is a Mende, and not a Creole from the capital.

In short, it may be said that future convulsions would seem probable, if not certain, in Sierra Leone with the advent of independence, possibly in 1961, and in Liberia with the retirement of President Tubman, possibly in 1959. By such time, however, one may confidently predict that a new generation of African leaders will have begun to emerge.

After this brief survey of individual territories, the difficulties of evaluating the future will be appreciated. Nevertheless, let us attempt to consider what the prospects for West Africa appear to be.

West Africa, to begin with, is evidently capable of supporting its population from its own resources, for despite the scarcity of certain nutritionally necessary foods, such as milk, it is nevertheless an agricultural region whose population by no means exceeds its food-growing potential. Furthermore, it has other resources which will be available for export—iron, tin, gold, aluminum, manganese, tropical hard-

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woods, rubber, cocoa, palm-oil, and peanuts. It also has a considerable hydro-electric power potential. These resources, however, are often scattered over vast areas, lacking in communications, and divided into multifarious population patterns by such traditional, ethnic, religious, and tribal feuds as we have outlined above. The supreme task, therefore, is to integrate these disparate elements into a relatively harmonious inter-relationship, if anarchy is not to supervene.

Immediately, however, the prospect is the granting of independence to the British enclaves, accompanied by the creation of armed forces. Sporadic conflicts may be anticipated, and the whole area will continue to be subject to strong social undercurrents inappropriate to the conditions needed for the maintenance of modern industrialized states. If, in this situation, existing conflicts should be further fomented by outside interests—whether Russian Communist, American business, or European colonial—a complete social breakdown might result. These risks are in no way lessened by the fact that many who care nothing for the future of West Africa will be trying to fish in the troubled waters which lie ahead.

The best hope for ultimate stability lies in the investment in West Africa of a sufficient sustained educational effort, above all in technical skills. As it is, too large a proportion of West Africans remain uneducated; too large a proportion of trained personnel elect to remain abroad; and too large a proportion of those who return are trained in verbal rather than technical skills. Should, however, the necessary educational investment take place, the creation of the only proposed form of West African society which does not come into collision with traditional institutions might then become feasible—that is to say the federation of multi-nation states based on ethnic groupings regardless of whether at this stage the internal structure of each state be traditional or democratic in character. A number of West African leaders have already envisioned such a development, including Dr. Azikiwe with his plan for an ethnically decentralized 16-nation Nigeria. Prime Minister Nkrumah, too, at one time an advocate of an inter-African federation of the European-created states, is now also moving towards serious consideration of some form of regional federation.

V

In the meantime such questions as "Is it safe to accept Western capital?," "Shall we solicit any degree of Communist support?," or "Shall we attempt to raise ourselves, as it were, by our own bootstraps?" are likely to receive not one but a variety of answers, depending upon regional conditions and local sentiments. This fragmented pattern of response inevitably brings to mind the familiar Latin American pattern of foreign exploitation and social paralysis, while local strongmen struggle, successfully or otherwise, to maintain themselves in power. However, West Africa is less under American economic

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domination than most South American states, and is also more open to rival influence by no means exclusively communist in character. This means that a greater degree of international rivalry will offer Africans a more successful chance of weathering the long period ahead, when independence will by no means be secure, by playing off one foreign influence against another in order themselves to retain control of their economic resources.

A number of commentators, however, have foretold that, following the withdrawal of colonial power, conflicts will break out which will destroy the progress already made, after which West Africa will enter upon a period of stagnation. This possibility is not to be dismissed. Conditions involving stagnation, anarchy, and the exploitation of African by African may, indeed, come into being. However, against the forces of disintegration are pitted strong emotional forces toward cohesion, the manifestations of which are not to be underestimated.

West Africa is entering upon a period of national revolution as intense as any which have shaken the old societies of the past. West Africa may also be expected to produce an unprecedented social response. Drawing its strength from the determination to place foundations under a newly-won independence, to achieve a voice in the affairs of the world, to support national revolutionary movements in other parts of the continent, and to defeat what are regarded as the neo-colonialist plans of the West, this upsurge may, in time, produce responses more adequate than those hitherto produced, for example, by Latin America. This revolutionary upsurge may yet succeed in forcing coastal and hinterland societies, when faced with overwhelming threats to the entire area, into concluding working agreements. But before this can happen we must anticipate a period of simultaneous change, intrigue, economic development, educational progress, and political confusion.

The future of West Africa ultimately depends upon the achievement of harmony between the coast and the interior—this is the crux of the problem. If the peoples of the coast and those of the hinterland cannot eventually come to terms, then the only possibility is social disruption and economic paralysis until such a time as the outside world breaks in once more in some arbitrary fashion. But here the fortune teller falters to a stop, and the shapes in the crystal blur beyond recognition. We are left to turn questioningly to one another, vainly seeking an answer—our reason assailed by grim warnings, our emotions irrevocably committed to hope.

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BEHIND THE MAU MAU REBELLION

Martin L. Kilson, Jr.

When the Mau Mau rebellion broke out in Kenya in the fall of 1952, the American press was quick to interpret it as a "terroristic" uprising by a people barely a few generations away from "savagery." It was said that Mau Mau was primarily anti-Christian and anti-European, and had as its basic aim the removal of all whites from Kenya. Amid these sensationalistic charges, almost no one troubled to investigate the possible social and political factors underlying the uprising. It was hardly even considered that Mau Mau, despite its "terroristic" manifestations, might be an authentic expression of African needs and demands.

Like the rest of tropical Africa, Kenya has undergone significant social and economic change in the past 50 years. The Kenya African is today reacting to those social and economic changes in all sorts of ways. In fact, at virtually no point during the history of Kenya under British rule have the Africans failed to respond, favorably or unfavorably, to these changes. Particularly is this true of the Kikuyu people, the largest group in Kenya (approx. 1,500,000) and perhaps the most politically conscious, whose response took the form of political organization and agitation. A glance at the history of the Kikuyu's political response to the changes in his society may thereby place the Mau Mau in its proper historical perspective.

I

Unlike most of Africa south of the Sahara, Kenya is climatically suitable for European settlement. Significant European settlement in Kenya began in 1902-03, and today it contains some 30,000 Europeans who control a major part of its social, economic and political life. In order to settle these Europeans, it was necessary for the Colonial government to provide them with both land and a labor force to work it. And since most of the land suitable for European settlement was originally under African occupation—as well as being the African's basic source of subsistence—it became necessary to alienate much of it. Once the African's land had been alienated, there followed legal and other barriers against his regaining it. The Crown Land Ordinance of 1915, which declared all tribal lands to be "Crown Land"—i.e., subject to the control of the Crown—made all Africans "tenants-at-will of the Crown."

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The only cheap and abundant source of labor power for work on the alienated land was the African. To secure this labor, compulsory methods were employed. What is more, this labor was poorly paid and and treated with utmost indifference; child and female labor were frequently utilized for many years. The loss of land by the Africans and the removal of thousands from the traditional tribal society for work on European plantations, resulted in a steady breakdown of the tribal socio-cultural complex. This, of course, was to be expected, particularly with the introduction of an exchange or money economy and the rise of large-scale agricultural production for the market. No primitive-communal society could withstand the impact of modern economic forces. Yet one might expect that the consequences of the disintegration of the African's traditional social structure would have been planned for by the British colonial government. This, however, was not the case, and the Africans—especially the Kikuyu—were left to face the new world of modernity as best they could.

The Kikuyu are an agricultural folk, with the raising of sheep, goats and other livestock a basic part of their economy. At the time of the European entry into Kenya, the Kikuyu inhabited much of the Highland area which comprises some of the most valuable land in the country. Of the 16,173 square miles which comprise the Highlands, 9,872 square miles were alienated to Europeans. A significant part of this land had belonged to the Kikuyu people, or had been frequently and freely used by them. The subsequent land congestion—due, as well, to a rapid population rise and insufficient agricultural production resulting from rudimentary farming methods—forced many Kikuyus to seek work on European plantations or in European owned mines. Thus relegated to the economic role of an agrarian proletariat, the Kikuyu became the most significant tribal group in Kenya.

The Kikuyu's response to his new agrarian-proletarian existence, and to the causes behind it, was primarily political. The first Kikuyu attempt at political organization as a means of expressing their needs was in 1921, when the Young Kikuyu Association (YKA) was founded by Harry Thuku, a Kikuyu telephone operator in the Treasury at Nairobi, in order to combat an effort by the Convention Association (a white settler organization founded in 1905) to reduce African wages by one-third. The YKA also expressed grievances against the colonial government: the use of child and female labor, maltreatment of Kikuyu elders and women, excessive hut-tax, restrictions on movement within Kenya due to a registration system, and fines for cutting fire wood in forests which were once theirs. Like the Mau Mau some thirty-one years later, the YKA had relatively little trouble in securing mass support among the Kikuyu, and this was due primarily to the fact that British colonial policy affected not simply one or another person but the whole Kikuyu people. The very nature of the Kikuyu socio-cultural system required an abundant supply of land, without which it could not exist. Thus the alienation of Kikuyu land not only affected

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their basic means of subsistence, but also the very foundation of their society. As the Kikuyu social anthropologist and political leader, Jomo Kenyatta, has pointed out:

> When the European comes to the Kikuyu country and robs the people of their land, he is taking away not only their livelihood, but the material symbol that holds the family and tribe together. In doing this he gives one blow which cuts away the foundations from the whole of Kikuyu life, social, moral, and economic.*

For these and similar reasons, virtually every Kikuyu felt himself to have a stake in the YKA. The YKA, however, was not very successful in winning its demands. Its leader, Harry Thuku, was arrested on March 15, 1921, on grounds of sedition, whereupon a riot broke out the following day resulting in the death of some 21 persons. The YKA was subsequently outlawed by General Northey, Governor of Kenya, its members imprisoned, and its leader exiled from Kikuyu country. But the conditions that gave rise to the YKA remained and, in certain respects, became progressively worse—particularly the problem of land hunger. As a result, the emergence of a new political organization like the YKA was more than likely. Or, to put it another way, "whether or not further trouble with the natives [like the Thuku movement] arises will largely depend upon government policy in the future."**

II

That the colonial government's policy towards such crucial questions as land and labor did not significantly change after the outlawry of the YKA is evidenced, in part, by the founding of the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) in 1922. The continuance of the land policy in particular—and thus the Kikuyu grievances—made the organization of the KCA a rather easy task.

> When the Kikuyu Central Association, or K.C.A., as it was known... came into existence in 1922, with the expressed intention of finding a way to recover the "lost lands" of the Kikuyu, it was an easy matter to gather together a large following, drawn particularly from the many members of the landowning families who then had no land that they could call their own.
>
> Some of these people were living as squatters on land which had formerly belonged to them, working for the new European estate owners. Others were scattered throughout the length and breadth of Kikuyu country, living as *ahoi* or tenants on other Kikuyu's estates. These estates, with the rapidly growing rate of increase in the population, were yearly becoming more congested.†

During the period between the two World Wars, the KCA emerged as the most influential indigenous political organization in all of East Africa. Because of its militant role as spokesman for Kikuyu demands,

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* J. Kenyatta, *Facing Mt. Kenya* (1953) p. 317.
** R. L. Buell, *The Native Problem in Africa*, Vol. I (1928) p. 326.
† L. S. B. Leakey, *Mau Mau and the Kikuyu* (1953) p. 86.

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it was outlawed by the colonial government in 1940, the official charges being that the KCA's activity was detrimental to the British war effort.

The outlawry of the KCA, however, did not remove the grievances that brought it into being. What is more, with the impact of World War II on East Africa generally, new problems emerged and with them new demands on the part of the Africans. To express these a third African organization, the Kenya African Union (KAU), was founded in 1944 under the leadership of Jomo Kenyatta, Secretary of the former KCA. In 1947 the KAU described its purpose as follows:

> (1) That the political objective of the Africans in Kenya must be self-government by Africans for Africans, and in that African State the rights of all racial minorities would be safeguarded. (2) That more African seats should be provided immediately in the Kenya Legislative Council... (3) That more land be made available both in the Crown Lands and in the Highlands for settlement of Africans. (4) That compulsory and free education for Africans, as is given to the children of other races, is overdue. (5) That the *Kipande* [i.e., the registration system] with all its humiliating rules and regulations be abolished immediately. (6) That the deplorable wages, housing and other conditions of African laborers be substantially improved and that the principle of "equal pay for equal work" be recognised.*

Although the influence and the militancy of the KAU were greater than that of its predecessors, it was no more successful than they in attaining a satisfactory solution to African needs. On the question of African political representation in the Kenya Legislative Council, for example, the best proposal the KAU could muster from the colonial government was a representation of 5 nominated members for 5,500,000 Africans. This same government proposal (May, 1952) provided for 14 elected seats for 30,000 Europeans, 6 elected seats for 70,000 Indians, and 1 elected seat for 24,000 Arabs. The KAU strongly protested this arrangement, demanding a "common poll for all the peoples of Kenya to eliminate racial, religious and color discrimination." The KAU, however, did not exist long enough to execute its policy. In October, 1952, the organization was outlawed and its leaders imprisoned, charged with organizing the Mau Mau rebellion.

III

Far from being an isolated political phenomenon among Kenya Africans, the Mau Mau movement is closely related to the political struggles of the earlier organizations. The same social and economic problems that gave rise to the YKA, the KCA and the KAU lay beneath the emergence of Mau Mau. It is, at this point, worth examining these problems in some additional detail. Perhaps the most important single one is that of land hunger. In a memorandum submitted to the Morris Carter Land Commission in 1932, the Kikuyu Central Association noted that:

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* G. Padmore, *Africa, Britain's Third Empire* (1949), pp. 231f.

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> As a result of the wholesale and devastating evictions of Kikuyu land and the wholesale allotment of the same to the Europeans, the density of population in the Kikuyu country... exceeds in some cases 500 to a square mile. Thus some of the districts in our own province break the record of the density of the world population of any agricultural people and occupy perhaps third place in the record of the density of the world population...

In 1944, the almost incredible density figures of 1,100 and even 1,800 persons to the square mile were reported in some Kikuyu areas. The current density figures for the Kikuyu districts of Kiambu, Fort Hall, and Nyeri are 420, 411, and 272 per square mile respectively. It is also noteworthy that about

> 85 per cent of [Kikuyu] family holdings are of from two to five acres... 15 per cent of the holdings of a larger size are either high up on the mountain, or on the edge of the plain below. In the former, the ground is so steep, the cold so great, and the rain so excessive, that they produce only root crops, firewood and grass for thatching. In the latter, the rainfall is so scanty and uncertain that harvests are uncertain too.*

Yet at the very time the Kikuyu were suffering from land hunger, a great part of the usable land in Kenya was neither effectively occupied nor under cultivation. In 1922—the year of the founding of the KCA—the total area occupied by Europeans was 3,804,158 acres, of which a mere 234,055 acres were under cultivation; by 1925, 4,420,573 acres were occupied, of which 392,628 acres were under cultivation. Similarly, during the course of a debate on the Kenya land question in the British Parliament on July 9, 1936, Major Milner, speaking in opposition to a government proposal to add 6,455 square miles of land to the European occupied area, maintained that:

> In 1934 there were no less than 5,817 square miles of the European Highlands unused, and yet the Government propose... to add a further 6,455 square miles, making a total of 16,700 square miles in all. That proposal is ridiculous on the face of it. It is outrageous, and particularly so when one sees that the area cultivated year by year in Kenya is declining progressively. In 1932 something like 12.25 per cent was cultivated; in 1933, 11.41 and in 1934 10.82 per cent.

At present some 4,000 white farm families occupy 12,000 square miles of excellent land in the Highlands while more than 1,000,000 Kikuyu have about 2,000 square miles of cultivable land in their reserves. This state of affairs has kept intact the land congestion among the Africans, as well as all the hardships resulting from it. In fact, "everyone who knows the Kikuyu country as it is today must admit that the land is very overcrowded, with exception of certain small areas in the Nyeri district; it is carrying an agricultural population at a density which makes it very difficult for the people to grow enough food, even for subsistence..."**

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* N. Leys, *The Colour Bar in East Africa* (1941), p. 65. Cf. W. Fitzgerald, *Africa* (1952), pp. 256-257.

** Leakey, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

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The Kenya African has also sought solutions to problems relating to labor, the color bar, education, living standards, and African political representation. We have already noted the African's political demands, as well as the status of African political representation at the time of the outbreak of the Mau Mau rebellion, and the dissatisfaction with this state of affairs expressed by the Kenya African Union. Of the other problems, the question of the treatment of African labor has perhaps had the longest history. As early as 1900, Major E. S. Grogan, a Colonial official in East Africa, argued in his book *From the Cape to Cairo* that: "A good sound system of compulsory labour would do more to raise the nigger in five years than all the millions that have been sunk in missionary efforts for the last fifty. . . ." Eight years later Lord Delamere, the chief spokesman for the European settler population, urged the colonial government that "we have got to come to legalised methods and force the native to work; I hope that we may rely on the Government to meet the case." In 1917 the Governor of Kenya, Sir H. Conway Belfield, stated the colonial government's willingness to play its part in effecting a compulsory labor policy. And in 1919 his successor, General Northey, issued the so-called Northey Circular which officially established a compulsory or "induced" labor system in Kenya. Since then some form of compulsory labor has been continually practised in Kenya. Both the International Labor Conference (29th Session, 1946) and the United Nations (*ad hoc* committee report, 1953) have reported the use of compulsory labor in Kenya. Such a labor policy, it goes without saying, has enormously contributed to the sense of grievance held by the Africans against colonial rule and the European settlers.

IV

If the most fundamental form of racial separation in Kenya is land separation, one of the earliest secondary forms was the establishment of the *Kipande* or registration (pass-law) system during the first quarter of the 20th century. The *Kipande* system stems logically from the land situation, whereby the two races live in separate areas and the flow of blacks is from the reserves to the European farms and back again to the reserves. The *Kipande* seeks to make sure the African appears on European plantations when he is scheduled to be there. As might be expected, "many Africans have objected to the fact that the identity card was . . . used for recording the terms of service of employed natives. If a native left his Reserve he was obliged to carry his *Kipande* with him, with the result that the system came to have something of the same character as the 'pass' systems of the Union of South Africa or Southern Rhodesia."* Starting with the Thuku movement in 1921, African political organizations have demanded the cessation of the *Kipande*. In 1947 the KAU was successful in getting the colonial

* Lord Hailey, *Native Administration...*, Vol. I (1950) p. 91.

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government to amend the system (details of employment would no longer be recorded on the African's registration card).

Perhaps the most obvious aspect of the color bar in Kenya is in the area of social relationships. Stores, shops and restaurants, buses, schools and hospitals, all exist on a segregated basis. Mr. Fenner Brockway, M.P., has described his personal experiences with Kenya's color bar during a debate in the British House of Commons:

> In Nairobi I was with the African representative of the United Nations and the First Secretary from the Indian High Commissioner's Office, one a doctor of philosophy of Columbia University, and the other a Balliol degree man of Oxford, both much more cultured than I... We searched Nairobi for an hour in an endeavour to find a restaurant or an hotel where we could sit down to a meal together. Everywhere the order was "Europeans only."
>
> I have a more recent example of this. When my very great friend, in whom I always have confidence, chief Koinange, was charged with murder, it was arranged that Mr. Dingle Foot should go to Nairobi to defend him. He was met at the airport by an English solicitory and by Mr. Awori, an African Member of the Legislative Council. A room had been booked for Mr. Foot at a leading hotel in Nairobi. When Mr. Awori carried Mr. Foot's bag into the lobby of that hotel, he was immediately thrust out of the building, and Mr. Foot's reservation in that hotel was cancelled.

Linked with the color bar is the question of equal and adequate education for the African. In 1936 the colonial government spent £48,814 on 1,839 European school children; the expenditure per child was over £26. In the same year, the government spent £80,721 on 100,720 African school children; the expenditure per child was 16s. By 1952 the government spent £512,581 on European education and £731,-674 on African Education.. In 1951, 6,341 European children were enrolled in schools, and 362,218 African children. Considering the fact that there are 30,000 Europeans in Kenya as compared to 5,000,000 Africans, the foregoing figures speak for themselves. It is also noteworthy that education is compulsory for European children between the ages of 7 and 15, while not for African children. Furthermore, the type of education received by Africans is largely vocational, not merely to prepare them for agricultural work and semi-skilled labor, but also to help perpetuate their subordinate condition.

Related to both the color bar and education is the problem of African living standards. African wages are grossly inferior to European wages, as well as being inadequate for a satisfactory living standard. According to the Carpenter Report on African Wages, published in May 1954, 48 per cent of African agricultural workers earn less than 25s. a month, and 26 per cent less than 20s. Much of the pronounced differential between African and European incomes is due to the fact that most Africans are employed in agriculture or in unskilled jobs, while the overwhelming majority of employed Europeans work for the government or private industry. In this regard, the color bar (especially as its relates to land separation and to the social structure in

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Kenya) and the inadequacy of African education are in no small way responsible for the low wage incomes of Africans in Kenya.

Still another important aspect of the African's living standard concerns health, an extremely urgent problem. Tuberculosis is frequent throughout the country, and malnutrition, malaria, gastro-intestinal infections, and bronchopneumonia are frequently responsible for infantile deaths. Moreover, the average African is the host of numerous parasites which are responsible for such diseases as theniasis and schistosomaiasis.

One reason for the African's poor health is the housing problem. A recent *Economic Survey of British Colonial Territories* (1954) notes "a general shortage of housing in Kenya... particularly severe for the African population. The difficulty has arisen from the growth of industry and employment in the towns... It was estimated in 1951 that accommodation in Nairobi alone was required immediately for 10,000 persons, and for a further 15,000 in the next ten years."

It is against this situation that Mau Mau has rebelled.

V

A Kikuyu student at the School of Oriental and African studies, University of London, has written:

> Its [Mau Mau's] chief causes are the deeply frustrating conditions of life at all levels which the Kikuyu people are suffering now... This frustration had given rise to a bitterly nationalistic spirit among Africans—and Mau Mau was the outcome of this spirit in its most fanatical form of expression.*

Indeed, any serious discussion of the causes of Mau Mau must start with the fact that it did not emerge out of nowhere. On the contrary, *it emerged only after some thirty years of political struggle among Kenya Africans.* The three major Kikuyu political movements that preceded it, all sought the advancement of African life through constitutional means, and it is only if one remembers that these moderate efforts were entirely frustrated by the resistance of both the Kenya government and the white settlers that the Mau Mau reliance upon armed force becomes understandable. It is this particular aspect of the Mau Mau movement (somewhat misleadingly referred to as Mau Mau "violence and terror," though any use of armed force necessarily involves the use of violence and very frequently the use of terror, be it by Kenya Africans or the U.S. army) that has been seized upon by some observers to denounce Mau Mau as an illegitimate political movement. It should be pointed out, however, that even the earlier organizations toyed with the idea of utilizing armed force to redress African grievances. In 1932, the KCA noted in a memorandum to the Morris Carter Land Commission that:

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* P. K. Kahahu, "A Kikuyu Speaks of Kenya and Mau Mau," *The Anti-Slavery Reporter* (Jan. 1955) p. 7.

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> Had our land been thus robbed by any other native tribes armed with similar weapons as ourselves, the Kikuyu would have certainly given their lives for their property, but confronted by people with the latest and most formidable weapons of precision and destruction such an idea was and is unthinkable.

If those who hold the Mau Mau armed rebellion to be the result of the "savagery" and witchcraft of Kikuyu society are correct, then they must answer the question as to why the KCA did not resort to armed rebellion, since, if anything, Kikuyu society in 1932 was perhaps more "savage" than in 1952. The KCA, in fact, answered this question when it stated that such an armed rebellion was "unthinkable" in view of the armed superiority of their rulers. Yet Mau Mau, despite the continued military superiority of the British, has nonetheless used armed forces as its main weapon of attack. Why?

One reason for the Mau Mau's armed rebellion, as I have already noted, is the fact that the KCA and KAU were unable to redress African grievances through constitutional means. This failure was due less to the ineffectiveness of the KCA and KAU as political organizations than to the strong social, economic and political barriers confronting them. This relative failure seems to have convinced certain politically conscious elements among the Kenya Africans that constitutional methods —i.e., working within the framework of the legal and political forms of a colonial system—would no longer suffice. Force, they seem to have concluded, was the only answer.* In a profound sense, then, it is the whites who are responsible for the desperate methods employed by Mau Mau.

Secondly, after World War II the social, economic and political life in Kenya was significantly altered, and new African grievances and demands arose. New ideas had taken hold among many Kenya Africans, due, on the one hand, to the anti-fascist propaganda disseminated by the British among the general population and, on the other, to the fact that many Africans fought in Burma against the Japanese. As a result, the African became still more conscious of his oppressed status in his own country. He was no longer willing to live at the level of mere subsistence that prevailed during the pre-war period.

> The Kikuyu today are not content to live at a bare subsistence level. They want their children to go to school and this means paying fees and providing uniforms. They want to buy decent clothes for themselves and their families and the prices of these are very high. They want to buy a variety of foods which they cannot grow for themselves; tea, coffee, butter, wheat, flour, etc., as well as commodities like soap, mirrors, razors, gardening tools, and all the many other things which they have learned to use. In most cases, a family cannot hope to make enough money for these requirements from the sale of surplus produce from its small piece of land, as well as grow the basic food-stuffs of Kikuyu diet.**

* For this observation and several others specifically related to the rise of Mau Mau, the author is greatly indebted to two Kikuyu informants currently studying in the U.S.

** Leakey, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

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Furthermore, many Africans now enjoyed the knowledge of modern warfare (particularly guerrilla warfare, learned in Burma) and the ability to master modern arms. In fact, they were even capable of manufacturing their own arms from rudimentary household equipment, as evidenced by Mau Mau arms captured by the British forces. Thus the post-war African possessed some of the ideological and practical requirements necessary for moving an oppressed people along lines of armed rebellion.

Yet, it should be stressed, the immediate post-war period was not characterized by armed rebellion. Quite the contrary; the KAU was founded during this period and continued to advance African demands through constitutional forms. Feeling itself much stronger than any political organization in the history of Kenya, the KAU broadened its demands and propagated them in a rather militant manner. According to a Kikuyu informant of the author, the white settlers became increasingly fearful of the KAU—and particularly its leader, Jomo Kenyatta—as it grew in number and influence. What was particularly disturbing were the KAU's demands for greater African representation, with African self-government as the ultimate goal.

Meanwhile (1949-1952) quite a few uprooted Africans were arrested for such criminal acts as stealing, vagrancy, burning European property, etc. This situation proved useful to the white settlers. They announced, through the *East Africa Standard* (the major European publication in Kenya), the existence of a "crime wave" and connected it with an alleged secret Kikuyu society called "Mau Mau."* Furthermore, it was claimed that Mau Mau was nothing but a creature of the KAU doing the "dirty work" in its alleged effort to evict all whites from Kenya. Being the dominant group in the Kenya Legislative Council, the white settlers were successful in getting the government to declare curfews in four areas of the Kikuyu Reserve. The curfew was soon extended to all travel in and out of Nairobi. In addition, eight emergency bills were introduced in the Legislative Council, over the opposition of the African members, making compulsory the registration of all organizations having ten or more members, controlling all African newspapers, permitting the seizure of all African publications issued without legal permit, and granting the police power to detain and/or arrest Africans without warrant. These acts evidently sounded the bell for open rebellion. During the following weeks, Mau Mau took to the field of battle, and on Oct. 20th, 1952, a State of Emergency was declared and British forces moved into Kenya.

Shortly afterward, the KAU was outlawed and its leaders were

* Cf. Pankhurst, *Kenya, a History of Two Nations* (1955), p. 86. According to Kikuyu informants of the author, there is no such word as "Mau Mau" in the Kikuyu language and thus there could not have existed any Kikuyu society with such a name. Hence it is believed that the white settler press coined the name "Mau Mau" in order to give a sinister-like picture of the group responsible for the alleged crimes. Cf. G. Padmore, "Behind the Mau Mau," *Phylon* (4th Quarter, 1953) p. 365. Cf. Leakey, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

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tried on charges of organizing Mau Mau. At his trial Jomo Kenyatta pleaded not guilty as charged, and claimed that the colonial government and white settlers had seized upon the Mau Mau rebellion as a means to discredit the KAU and its struggle for African equality and independence.* If we accept Kenyatta's claim that the KAU neither organized nor sponsored the Mau Mau movement (and there is significant doubt that the government conclusively proved that it had),** one must search elsewhere for the origin of Mau Mau. Kikuyu informants of the author maintain that *what is called Mau Mau emerged as a dissident group within the KAU that wanted to push harder and faster for African advancement than did the KAU leadership.* This group comprised many Kikuyu ex-soldiers who fought for Britain in Burma, as well as many young Kikuyu. It evidently had no professed ideology, though its ultimate aims were essentially the same as those of the KAU. It utilized certain indigenous tribal forms (or what some observers have called "savagery") as a means to spread its appeal among, and secure support from, the Kikuyu masses. When the Kenya government increased its police and legal action against African political activity in 1952, this group decided to meet force with force. And let it be noted that colonial rule by definition implies force as an instrument of rule.

A more detailed analysis of the rise of Mau Mau would require far more data than are now available. Whatever the intricacies of the actual formation of Mau Mau may be, and however interesting a

* Cf. M. Slater, *The Trial of Jomo Kenyatta* (1955).
** *Ibid.* Cf. D. C. Holland, "Law and Order in Kenya" *The Anti-Slavery Reporter* (Jan. 1955) pp. 8-16. Cf. Slater, *op. cit.*

Those "Voluntary" Confessions

MAU MAU detainees in the detention camps and prisons of Kenya are screened white, grey or black, according to the amount of their involvement in Mau Mau.

The first stage in their rehabilitation is when they confess to the Rehabilitation Officer that they have been in the Movement, and give him information around their own or other people's crimes.

These confessions are always referred to by the Government as voluntary. But it all depends on what you mean by free will.

When I was in Kenya, I visited a prison with a Rehabilitation Officer and saw a truck containing about a dozen African lunatics, who were being sent to a mental hospital. They were making a horrible noise, shouting and gesticulating and grimacing.

The Prison Officer said he was glad to see them go, as they had disturbed his prison for a whole year.

The Rehabilitation Officer said he was sorry they were going, as he had intended putting detainees who would not confess, in with them for a few days.

"Now I have nothing to rely on but light diet and a good trashing," he said.

—EILEEN FLETCHER, in *Tribune* (England), June 1.

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study of these may prove, it can be said without doubt that if there were not fundamental and genuine grievances among the Kikuyu people such a movement could have never gained the support it has. Mau Mau is a *popular rebellion* and, as Burke saw, popular rebellion is the result of popular suffering and hardship.

Since the rise of Mau Mau, the colonial government has granted a few inadequate political concessions to the Africans. The demand for self-government is still to be met, as well as the basic problem of African land hunger and such other closely related problems as the color bar, African education and living standards. In view of the past and present situation in Kenya, further African rebellions are likely to take place before these problems are settled. It is noteworthy that a recent attempt to form a new African political organization in Kenya was prohibited by the government. The new organization, called the Kenya African National Congress, was to organize along lines similar to those of the outlawed KAU. At its organizing meeting in Nairobi in December 1955, attended by approximately 1,000 Africans, its leader, Mr. C. M. Arguings-Kodhek, an African lawyer practicing in Nairobi, stated that the policy of the new party would be "slightly left of center." He declared that its aims would be to promote political organizations among Kenya Africans, "to cultivate in them political and civic awakening and consciousness" and to "cultivate mutual relations with other political organization in Kenya."* That even so moderate an African organization was immediately suppressed tells us more about the causes of the Mau Mau rebellion than any number of sensational and ignorant journalistic reports. One need hardly approve of certain Mau Mau methods in order to see how deeply rooted the movement is in the desires and the desperation of an oppressed people. Under such conditions, rebellion is inevitable; under such conditions, rebellion, no matter how harshly suppressed, must again and again reappear.

* *Africa Digest* (Jan.-Feb., 1956) p. 6.

African Grievances and the Mau Mau

When we were in Nairobi [Kenya], Africans could not:

1. Buy a drink of hard liquor.
2. Go out at night without a pass.
3. Carry arms.
4. Assemble publicly or privately, even in groups of three or four, or listen to their leaders.
5. Buy land in the White Highlands.
6. Grow coffee or sisal, except under certain restrictions.
7. Go to 'white' restaurants, night clubs, movies, and the like, or use a European public toilet.
8. Put on their own dances or *ngomas*, or give playlets traditional to tribe life.
9. Vote.

—from JOHN GUNTHER'S *Inside Africa*

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AFRICAN NATIONALISM: A CRITICAL PORTRAIT

F. Oladipo Onipede

Both as a concept and a social movement, African nationalism contains three major elements: 1) a pervasive antagonism to alien domination, particularly that of the European powers; 2) a quest by Africans for "moral status"—first in their homelands and then in the world—which is partly the result of their response to Western humanism; 3) the continuing influence and strength of the religious-cultural values that are indigenous to African life.

As for the first of these—resentment of alien domination—its main function is to create a sense of African fraternity, a common outlook that helps give coherence and continuity to the numerous nationalist movements. Historically, it should be remembered, Africa has experienced two kinds of colonialism—that administered from the capital of a European power and that controlled by white settlers on the spot. Accordingly, opposition to colonial rule has been of two kinds.*

"Classical" imperialism as administered by a European state has, at least occasionally, provided a channel for registering African grievances and gaining limited concessions; and while meager enough when compared to the nationalist demands, such amelioration does create possibilities for further change and compromise. In the case of territories with white settlers, however, the very opposite is true: there is no effective clearing-house for the consideration of African needs. Afraid to discuss the African's demands with him lest that seem an implicit recognition of equality, the white settler feels that to grant even a small concession means to pave the way for a cataclysm which would destroy his privileged existence. The African, confronted with such an unyielding attitude, has no choice but force. It is this difference in kinds of colonial rule that explains why three new constitutional reforms were promulgated in Nigeria and the Gold Coast between 1950 and 1955, while in Kenya and Algeria, where the whites have established themselves as local ruling classes, there has been constant bloodshed.

The second element in African nationalism—the effort to absorb the assumptions of Western humanism—represents a stage beyond mere resentment of alien rule, and generates some powerful liberal ideas.

* There is a third type of colonial domination that will not be discussed here, i.e., the economic domination of independent African countries by the European cartels and giant American business interests.

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For the African's determination to regain his lost "moral status" is an index of his growing political maturity, and consequently a principle of existence that cannot be compromised. That is why the elimination of "white supremacy" in Africa, while it might soon decrease hostility toward the European powers, is only the first step toward realizing the moral dignity of the African peoples—and this within the framework of an African socio-cultural heritage that, in many respects, continues to be vital and significant for the people of the continent. So it is, then, that the three major components of African nationalism sustain one another and lead to a further growth of needs and values.

I

In the latest stages of African nationalism, perhaps the most significant new development is that the youth has begun to take over leadership. Particularly in South Africa, the older generation of African nationalist leaders has been replaced by younger and more dynamic men who are not lawyers, ministers or doctors. This new leadership is recruited from such professions as journalism, and it includes university professors, trade union leaders and a few business men. In East Africa there has been a noticeable trend toward an increasing participation of African teachers in politics, while in West Africa such trends have gone furthest of all.

The greatest asset of the new spirit of African nationalism has been the socio-cultural and intellectual awareness it has aroused among the people at large. So intense has the desire for learning become that in many parts of Africa schools have begun to flourish like mushrooms —even open-air schools held under tropical trees! Nor are these the traditional government or missionary schools; they are African owned and operated. For the first time, African history has come to be an item in the school curriculum. Parallel with this change is the way in which newspapers have begun to invade the rural countryside and the inland towns. And in the limited orbit of the industrial sector, the growth of trade unionism has been phenomenal; trade unions, indeed, have nurtured the first cells of African nationalism.

The younger nationalist leaders have thus been forced to formulate their appeals and programs in language that is intelligible to the masses of the country rather than to the westernized African middle class and the outside world that has trained this middle class. One immediate implication of this fact is that *African symbols and institutions have begun to be given priority and preference over the ideas and language of western liberalism.* Nor is this a surface phenomenon; it represents a deep-going trend of enormous importance for the future of African nationalism.

Somewhat similarly, in order to give greater social validity to the whole movement, the younger nationalist leaders have solicited the support of the "natural rulers" and their political vanguard, which I shall

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call the "indigenous leadership" of Africa.* Since 1900 this leadership has been largely integrated into the colonial administrative machinery by the system of Indirect Rule. To restore independent political activities (i.e., activities outside the framework of the colonial administration) to this "indigenous leadership"—as the nationalist movements are now trying to do—would mean to cripple permanently the system of Indirect Rule upon which so much of colonial imperialism rests.

So far, this growing alliance between the "indigenous leadership" and the younger nationalist leaders has often been a marriage of convenience. The Westernized young nationalists tend to look upon it in terms of expediency, while the "indigenous leadership," fearful that its influence will be swept away by the new political movements, hurries to regain some of its lost prestige.

II

Together with, and partly in reaction to, these three central currents of African nationalism there have arisen a number of counter-currents. These counter-currents, it should be stressed, are not necessarily negative, since at times they contain desirable values which serve to restrain the excesses that might accompany sudden social change. Particularly is this true of African nationalism, where the outlooks and opinions of the numerous factions tend to be extremely amorphous.

The most pronounced counter-current is to be found in the African's response—at once emulous and resentful—to Western mores, and especially as this ambivalence is manifested in his socio-political behavior. Dr. David Apter, author of *The Gold Coast in Transition,* describes this problem in terms that are meant to apply to the Gold Coast but have a more general relevance:

> The British are used as symbols of imperialism on the one hand, and as standards for behavior on the other. The former attitude toward the British is in the arena for the crowds, and for political rallies; the latter is in the daily routine of governmental business.

This kind of equivocation, for all that it is humanly understandable, tends to impose a painful schizophrenia on the emergent "moral being" of the new African. What is involved here is not so much the problem of how to retain the superstructure of the Western systems of education, government and technology, but rather, how best to integrate these institutions into the over-all life of African society while still maintaining the fundamental integrity of African ways of life.

* By the term "indigenous leadership" we do *not* mean the system of tribal chieftainship which is usually sponsored by the colonial power under Indirect Rule. Appointed tribal chiefs may be part of this leadership, but not its essence. We mean rather the elected political leaders of the people. Elections take place informally according to group units (tribe, village, etc.). This leadership extends from the village headman up through the African ethnic and tribal nobility to kings and queens. Its roots lie deep in Africa's past. These people form what may be called the "natural" and authentic leadership within Africa and exist alongside of whatever colonial system may have been set up. It is not a hereditary leadership in the Western sense since power may be transmitted in more than one way.

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There is a second and equally powerful counter-current, a tendency that inheres in the very principle or nature of nationalism. In 1862, long before the advent of contemporary African nationalism, Lord Acton described the aftermath of the French revolution:

> The deepest cause which made the French Revolution so dangerous to liberty was its theory of equality. Liberty was the watchword of the middle class, equality of the lower... The middle class, having cast down the upper orders with the aid of the lower, instituted a new inequality and privilege for itself.

The "upper orders" in Africa are the occupying colonial powers of Europe; and, as for the "middle class," its present counterpart is the westernized African for whom liberty means primarily the liquidation of the colonial rule. But to the "lower class," i.e. the masses, liberty means not only political equality but economic and educational opportunity, as well as the preservation of fundamental African institutions. In its inner values and formal outlooks, the intellectual vanguard of African nationalism is largely Westernized, while the mass of the people, though anxious to raise its standard of living through industrialization, is extremely unwilling to sacrifice its basic African heritage. The conflicts here are obvious, though still largely potential.

To illustrate the nature of this conflict one should go to the most difficult of all African problems, the problem of land. Land is the most important source of African wealth, and the land tenure system is known in Africa as the practice of Communal Ownership. In legal theory, it should be stressed, Communal Ownership recognizes and provides for individual ownership of land in perpetuity *provided certain conditions are fulfilled.* The two most important conditions are: (1) The land must be worked and cannot lie fallow; (2) It cannot be sold, but must remain within the family. Both the British and French colonial laws have recognized and applied this principle of African law. Yet one of the paradoxical results of this recognition of Communal Ownership has been that all rights to mineral-bearing lands are vested in the colonial state, and that in theory at least, the long-run political and economic implications of this principle of Communal Ownership has been that the initiative for economic development is reserved to the colonial state. Furthermore, the abject poverty of modern Africa has also strengthened the tendency toward state intervention and initiative in economic life.

Now this trend may be in essential harmony with the traditions and economic theory of Communal Ownership, but it is also diametrically opposed to the assumptions of Western liberal thought. *These, however, are the very assumptions that largely determine the socio-economic thinking of the Westernized class that has so far monopolized the leadership of the African nationalist movements.* And when it is realized that in the near future this Westernized class of Africans is likely to inherit political power from the colonial overlords, the seriousness of the conflict between the communal traditions of African

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society and the bourgeois liberal orientation of African nationalism becomes particularly striking.

Why the problem is alarming becomes clear when one examines the political and economic platforms of the various nationalist parties, particularly those of West Africa. Their lack of a definite political-economic ideology is a grave handicap. At least within the past three centuries, hardly any nation has been able to raise its standard of living and create a military capable of defending its sovereignty without subscribing to a definable economic and political doctrine. Both economic development and social enlightenment are central to the nationalist obligation, and failure to achieve an appreciable degree of either spells doom to any nationalist party. But in contemporary Africa, except for the establishment of various patterns of parliamentary government, there is no adequate social fibre, no strong enough indigenous class, to ensure stable economic growth. The new African nations that are on the horizon will thus be dependent, economically, on the fluctuations in the international market and, intellectually, on the restatement by Westernized nationalists of the decadent tenets of *laissez-faire*. At the same time, however, beneath the thin veneer of the imposed Western political and economic superstructures there lies the fundamental practice of Communal Ownership. It is a way of life that is complete by itself and it embodies political capacities that are undeveloped and largely neglected. And gradually it is becoming a matter of common knowledge that the African codes of ethics can hardly be reconciled with the imposed Western codes.

III

The third counter-current may be summed up as a tendency to reduce the principle of nationality to ethnic exclusiveness. Because the colonial territorial states of Africa have unnatural political boundaries, drawn during the nineteenth century on the drafting boards of Western imperialism, *each of the 63 multi-national colonial states constituting present-day Africa has a number of national entities (ethnic groups and whole societies) arbitrarily brought together within a common boundary.* Thus the principle of nationality tends to intensify the inherent ethnic feelings of exclusiveness. These exclusive ethnic societies within a common artificial boundary are of two types in Africa: (1) the racial type, instituted by the white settlers; (2) the indigenous type, best described as a linguistic and cultural segmentation.

At this point a definition of a multi-national colonial state may be useful. It is a territorial colonial state with more than one racial or linguistic-cultural ethnic group, each living side-by-side with the other but each having an independent cultural and historical identity, yet all being subject to the same political authority, i.e., colonial rule. Besides the racial or linguistic-cultural differentiation, there is another aspect that distinguishes these two kinds of plural societies in colonial

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Africa. In the *racially differentiated* society the politically dominant white settlers always constitute a small numerical minority. The population strength of the white settler varies from as low as 0.3 per cent in Kenya to about 21 per cent in the Union of South Africa. On the other hand, in the *linguistic-culturally differentiated* society, the dominant national groups enjoy their position largely by virtue of their population strength.

While antagonism to foreign domination is an integrating force that gives solidarity to African nationalism, yet with every substantial achievement of nationalism there is also a marked growth in the African's awareness of the exclusiveness inherent in the various unintegrated socio-cultural groups. This tendency, which may be designated as tribalism, can be summarily defined as a socio-cultural antagonism to political and economic domination by the predominant national group (be it racial or linguistic-cultural) in a given African society.

The principle of nationality which is a by-product of nationalism aims at unifying a differentiated plural society on the multi-national level. But the antagonisms among the various ethnic units undermine the political solidarity of the emerging national state as well as weakening the nationalist front. This weakness has been exploited to give the impression that the strength of tribalism in colonial politics proves the incapacity of the African nationalist movement to unify the country for political independence. But such rationalization has no historical basis since most of the independent sovereign nations of the world are themselves plural societies of one sort or the other.

Politically and economically, tribalism—of which there are two patterns in Africa, regional and territorial—may exhibit a certain amount of destructive features. Its cultural significance, however, is mainly constructive and desirable. The three-way political division of the Nigerian nationalist movement and the sudden rift within the Gold Coast nationalist drive for independence are two results of regional tribalism. At the very worst, regional tribalism in West Africa can only delay the immediate achievement of independence. As a political force it is limited in its capacity to exploit linguistic-cultural differences as well as to nurse socio-political exclusiveness. But this canker on the nationalist efforts can be eliminated by corrective measures in the constitutional structure and by politico-administrative re-organization directed against all reactionary aspects of tribalism.

On the other hand, East Africa exhibits a different pattern of tribalism, designated as territorial tribalism. In the British Somaliland and in Somalia, territorial tribalism as a politico-cultural force cuts through colonial boundaries in an attempt to bring about the unity of the same ethnic group. It is important to point out that in these two colonial territories, it is territorial tribalism and not nationalism that remains the most powerful force making for unification and independence. For its immediate objective, territorial tribalism attempts

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to correct a political injustice imposed by European imperialism, i.e., it attempts to eliminate unnatural political boundaries.

Nonetheless, the seemingly noble objective of territorial tribalism may be attended by dangerous consequences. In the past five years, this kind of tribalism has become the dominating political force in both British and French Togoland. In these two United Nations Trust Territories, there are a minimum of twenty-seven linguistic-cultural groups, and the Ewe national group alone constitutes 62 per cent of the combined population. Should territorial tribalism achieve its objective, the Ewe people will become the dominant group in a unified Togoland. It is obvious that adequate constitutional measures are necessary to ensure minority rights in such a case.

Both regional and territorial tribalism contain some positive aspects when they are considered as a corollary to African nationalism. The socio-cultural values of either pattern of tribalism is a constant inspiration for the creative development of society. Tribalism is introverted, deriving its impetus largely from past historical events, figures or myths. This makes for awareness of a cultural tradition and should serve to arrest the undesirable aspects of cultural imperialism during the process of Westernization. Perhaps the best influence of tribalism is to be found in its attempt to preserve socio-cultural codes of ethical behavior and to encourage a mutual respect for cultural diversity within the same political state.

IV

There is one aspect of African nationalism that deserves special mention. Due to the preoccupation with the overthrow of European domination, elimination of the color bar, and the curbing of tribalism as a countercurrent, nationalism in Africa has so far failed to face squarely the problem of economic independence. Yet, African nationalist leaders have repeatedly reminded themselves of the fact that political independence without economic self-sufficiency is a trap. The slogan has been, "Seek political freedom first and all other things will follow." Historically, however, this has never been true.

Within the next decade, at least half a dozen colonial states will surely gain their political independence. Because of the economic and technological poverty, as well as the population sparsity of these emergent states—Gold Coast, Nigeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Tanganyika and the Central African Federation—the mere transfer of political power will not be accompanied by an economic revolution. But the major demands for economic independence i.e., participation and control, which have accompanied African nationalism will continue to receive greater attention. The index of economic independence will be measured not by pretentious economic plans or the amount of foreign capital that is attracted, but rather by the pursuit of calculated economic development programs based upon a definable economic doctrine that reflects the needs of the people.

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Today, no country is completely independent economically. But quite a number of countries are in a position to determine their economic destiny. The same must be achieved by the emerging states of Africa. The present drive toward industrialization is both a by-product of African nationalism and a result of enlightened colonial policy. Since the post-war era, the three leading imperial states—the United Kingdom, France and Belgium—have embarked upon a certain amount of economic development in Africa. What is pertinent here are the reasons and objectives of this change in colonial policy.

Under the stress imposed by the postwar international situation, the European colonial powers took the initiative in proposing blueprints for colonial development programs, thereby claiming the moral and economic right to control the broad course of the socio-economic changes. By thus retaining the initiative, the European powers partly sapped the morale of the nationalist movements and at the same time made it certain that the nationalist movements would nonetheless have to participate in these schemes.

This colonial development policy had as its immediate objectives: first, to create economic facilities that will be the most attractive to foreign capital; second, to promote institutions congenial to private enterprise regardless of their disruptive influences on indigenous socio-economic life; third, to consolidate and expand the economic positions of the already established European vested interests *vis-a-vis* new incoming foreign capital and concurrently to narrow the horizon of economic opportunity for the Westernized African. Concretely, this last objective reflects both the fear of American economic encroachment in Africa as well as an attempt to curtail and restrict the economic future of the would-be African capitalist. In its long-run aspects, the policy is essentially an attempt to integrate the economic development of the various colonial territories with metropolitan (European) economic needs.

It must be emphasized here that while some dependence of the colonial economy on the European powers cannot be avoided in the early stages of development, a deliberate plan to integrate the two is a different matter. The means for encouraging economic integration are numerous, but the following two may serve as illustrations. The first approach is to recruit a few prominent Westernized Africans into the alien-owned and controlled enterprises, and eventually allow such Africans a limited personal stake in the business. Thus far this approach has been confined largely to the nonproductive foreign enterprises, i.e., distributive business. A second approach is the attempt on the part of the newer foreign enterprises (the few interested in processing semi-finished goods) to solicit African partnerships but with a proviso limiting African interests to less than 30 per cent control.

Here a word must be said about the colonial economy itself. Essentially, it is an economy that depends for its income on primary eco-

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nomic activities like agriculture and mining. Secondary and tertiary economic activities are practically unknown. The main contact with international trade excludes capital transfer, i.e., blue chip securities or capital equipment.. Rather, the colonial economy restricts itself to export of primary products and commodities and the import of manufactured goods.

In the face of this overwhelmingly adverse economic situation, poltical independence, though necessary and desirable, does not guarantee immunity against continued economic domination. This is further substantiated by the fact that most of the politically independent countries in Africa today have varied patterns of colonial economy. The transformation of colonial economy into a mature economy can come about only when African nationalism becomes completely emancipated by evolving its own politico-economic ideology.

Finally, something should be said about the emergent new social class, i.e., the Westernized class of Africans, which is the agent ushering in social change and, in great part, is a by-product of nationalism. The leadership of this emerging social class is destined to inherit political authority, and when that happens its economic dominance and social prestige will become all the greater. One of the unpleasant conclusions to be drawn from the achievement of African nationalism is that in the struggle to liquidate alien rulers a new African ruling class has already arrived to take their place.

But it will be recalled that the original élite in African society was that group we have called the "indigenous leadership." Thus, the resistance of the latter to the emergent new Westernized class becomes fundamental and the repercussions affect every aspect of life. As pointed out earlier, the marriage of the "indigenous leadership" to the nationalist movement was one of convenience. Consequently, with every unpopular political blunder commited by the semi-colonial governments led by this Westernized social class, the old "indigenous leadership" will gain in prestige. Furthermore, in its haste to industrialize, the leadership of the new social class favors and is implementing economic policy known to be adverse to the fundamental basis of traditional society. So it is that the indigenous leadership is gradually emerging as the defender of traditional values and ways of life which still evoke legal and moral convictions in the masses. Paradoxically enough, this tends to transfer the most precious part of the nationalist appeal, i.e., "championship of the underdog," to the traditionalists and away from the nationalists.

V

The sense of hope and immediacy that nationalism has infused into African life may bring with it a political disillusionment which could, in turn, lead to a powerful setback to the nationalist movement. Once the masses, the most powerful source of support for

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nationalism, become disgruntled—which is a trend particularly discernible in West Africa—the future of the Westernized dominant class becomes precarious. The reasons for this dissatisfaction may be found in the tactical delays or actual failures of the leadership of the new class to bring the country to the "promised land." The promise of African nationalism is far greater than the mere attainment of political independence; in effect, it includes a substantial raising of the standard of living and a government that can effectively press for African claims in global politics. Thus, the growing reaction of the ordinary African is a return to the most natural source of political authority that he is accustomed to, i.e., the "indigenous leadership." In his recent study, Dr. Apter supports this point:

> Interviews with tribal chiefs in the Gold Coast revealed that some return to the traditional pattern of authority was regarded as inevitable... [they] depend upon the return to the only political structures which made sense to the people if the honeymoon with secular politics settles down to mass disenchantment.

Two important points follow. The first is that this "indigenous leadership" has regained some of the prestige it had lost since the advent of African nationalism. Secondly, the more the rule of the European powers—particularly the British—recedes behind the scenes, the more quickly will the new Westernized social class inherit full responsibility for colonial government policies, together with the deep-rooted antagonism to an alien institution of domination.

The new trend is particularly pronounced in West Africa. Regional tribalism and rapid economic development have threatened the structure of traditional society. These, in turn, have evoked among the masses and the lower echelons of the nationalist movement a reaction verging on political resignation. This political apathy becomes even more regrettable if we consider the new role of mediator which the British Crown is now attempting to play. Particularly for the enlarged rank-and-file of the younger nationalist generation, the result is political disenchantment when the former "enemy" seizes the initiative to become an "arbitrator" between Africans. Today, as never before in the history of West African nationalism, there is a marked feeling of doubt about the objectives of nationalism.

The attempt in this article to analyze African nationalism and to present a critical appraisal of it would have failed if the reader should conclude that nationalism has collapsed at the very dawn of its grand objective. Actually, African nationalism is still a powerful political-economic movement. Like similar forces in history it has reached a transition point. What is now required is an "agonizing reappraisal" in order to formulate a new political and economic ideology that will be realistic but, at the same time, reflect African background and orientation. Only then can the next requirement be forthcoming: a new leadership to realize this new orientation.

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In June, 1955 a Congress of the People of South Africa was held. About 3,300 people attended, plus several hundred police. This Congress received little or no notice in the American press. We print below the moving call that was issued for this Congress.

THE CONGRESS OF THE PEOPLE

We call the people of South Africa — Black and White

Let us speak together of freedom.

We call the farmers of the reserves and trust lands.
Let us speak of the wide land, and the narrow strips on which we toil. Let us speak of brothers without land, and of children without schooling. Let us speak of taxes and of cattle, and of famine.

Let us speak of freedom.

We call the workers of farms and forests.
Let us speak of the rich foods we grow, and the laws that keep us poor. Let us speak of harsh treatment and of children and women forced to work. Let us speak of private prisons, and beatings, and of passes.

Let us speak of freedom.

We call the workers of factories and shops.
Let us speak of the good things we make, and the bad conditions of our work. Let us speak of the many passes and the few jobs. Let us speak of foremen and of transport and of trade unions; of holidays and of houses.

Let us speak of freedom.

We call the housewives and the mothers.

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Let us speak of the fine children that we bear, and of their stunted lives. Let us speak of the many illnesses and death, and of the few clinics and schools. Let us speak of high prices and of shanty towns.

Let us speak of freedom.

We call the teachers, students, and the preachers.
Let us speak of the light that comes with learning, and the ways we are kept in darkness. Let us speak of great services we can render, and of the narrow ways that are open to us. Let us speak of laws, and government, and rights.

Let us speak of freedom.

Let us speak together—all of us together.
African and European, Indian and Colored. Voter and voteless. Privileged and rightless. The happy and the homeless. All the peoples of South Africa; of the towns and of the countryside.

Let us speak together of freedom.

And of the happiness that can come to men and women if they live in a land that is free.

Let us speak together of freedom.

And of how to get it for ourselves, and for our children.
Let the voice of all the people be heard. And let the demands of all the people for the things that will make us free be recorded. Let the demands be gathered together in a great Charter of Freedom.

We call all good men and true to speak now of freedom, and to write their own demands into the Charter of Freedom.

We call all who love liberty to pledge their lives from here on to win the Freedoms set out in the Charter.

We call all the People of South Africa to prepare for the Congress of the People where representatives of the people, everywhere in the land, will meet together in a great assembly, to discuss and adopt the Charter of Freedom.

Let us go forward together to freedom!

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IS SOUTH AFRICA NEAR REVOLT?

George M. Houser

When I was in Africa in 1954, I met a white South African business man who was spending a few days in Port Gentil looking after his timber interests. He was a man of realistic and conservative opinion; his attitude toward the African would hardly have won him an award from an interracial society. Although not himself an Afrikaner, he had all the apartheid prejudices usually associated with the Nationalist Party of South Africa. Yet as we talked about the current situation in South Africa, he said quite suddenly: "There's no future for the white man in South Africa. I'm going to set my son up in business in Canada. The white man has perhaps only five years left."

I discovered that this was a commonly held assumption by people of different races and widely varying political opinions. A liberal professor at the University of Natal told me that he looked for the Africans to gain political dominance within at least twenty-five years. Leaders of the African and Indian Congresses claimed that the non-whites would have their rightful place of leadership in no more than ten years. While the extreme Afrikaners will not admit that their power can be effectively challenged by the non-whites, their feverishness in applying apartheid with ever greater sternness reveals the most deep-seated insecurity.

It is easy for us in the United States to accept the assumption that in ten to twenty-five years, the non-white majority will control South Africa. We are far enough removed from the actual struggle to be free to think in comforting generalities. Many American visitors to South Africa have come back convinced that the treatment of the Africans is so unjust that revolutionary change must come soon. But I feel obliged to challenge this assumption—for two reasons.

First, it can lead to a complacency not unlike that of many Americans toward the struggle to achieve racial justice here. "Natural forces are bringing change about and consequently there is no need to push too fast." Somehow it is assumed that because forces are not completely discernible they produce change. This same detached attitude cannot, however, be taken in South Africa. We should be conscious of the fact that a dreadful struggle is shaping up and that, if change comes, it will be at the cost of great suffering. No natural process enacted above the historical struggle will bring a new day.

Second, when the forces at work in South Africa are looked at objectively, those making for preservation of the status quo are, also, more immediately formidable than those working for change.

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I

At least three factors can be cited for the argument that revolutionary change is imminent in South Africa. First, the conditions of the non-whites are unbearable. The non-whites are about 80 per cent of the population and the great majority of them are African. The impulse for revolution would naturally come from the African people, against whom the greatest discrimination is practiced. Under the land laws, beginning with the definitive Native Land Act of 1913, only about 12 1/2 per cent of the country's territory has been set aside in the Reserves for the African people. Both according to the theory of apartheid and within the law, the African has only the privilege, not the right, of being off the Reserve. Once off the Reserve he has no freedom of movement. He must have a pass to buy a railroad ticket, to look for a job, to live in a city, to stay out after curfew at night, to indicate he has a job, etc.

The potential for revolutionary change has increased greatly since the Nationalist Party came into power in 1948. Laws passed since this time are not different in kind from those passed under previous governments, but their rapidity and number have exacerbated an already disturbed situation. The Group Areas Act of 1950 gives the Government the right to delimit areas of the country in which particular racial groups can live. Under this act the City Council of Johannesburg embarked upon its "Western Areas Removal Scheme" by which some 60,000 Africans in Sophiatown, Newclare, and Martindale are being resettled in the Meadowlands, ten miles further out, so that white people can move into the vacated region.

1) *The Population Registration Act* makes it mandatory that all people register by race with the government and carry identification cards. This is working particular hardship on the Colored people of the country, some of whom are light enough to "pass" and some of whom are very dark.

2) *The Suppression of Communism Act* not only bans the Communist Party, but makes it possible to ban anyone who is thought to be a threat to the government. Under this act practically the whole effective leadership of such organizations as the African National Congress (ANC) has been removed from open public activities.

3) *The Bantu Education Act,* although not depriving the African of education, brings the apartheid philosophy into the educational field. The Minister of Native Affairs, who ultimately is responsible for the administration of the Act, has said that under it the African is being prepared for a role in the white world no higher than that of servant. Schools which have been under mission administration until this Act went into effect in April, 1955, have now been taken over by the government.

4) Trade union rights are denied African workers. There are some African unions, but legally they have no right to exist. A few are maintained as auxiliaries to white unions, but under the law the Africans cannot participate in collective bargaining.

Real participation in the political life of the country is denied the Africans as well as the Colored and the Indians. Non-whites may not be elected to Parliament. Only in Cape Province can African voters participate in elections by choosing three white

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persons to represent them in the Lower House of Parliament and four in the Senate. The Colored people have now been taken off the regular roll of voters in the Cape.

5) *The Reservation of Social Amenities Act* gives the proprietor of any public place the right to choose his patrons. He is protected by the law.

6) *The Criminal Laws Amendment Act* makes it a serious offense to be involved in activity in opposition to government policy. This act was passed early in 1953 as a means of stopping the 1952 Defiance Campaign. Under it a guilty party can be fined £500, sentenced to five years in prison, and given fifteen lashes with the whip. *The Public Safety Act,* passed at the same time, suspends civil liberties such as freedom of speech and press during an "emergency" period.

A second factor which may make revolt seem imminent is the amount of organizational activity among non-whites. Except for the Gold Coast and Nigeria, no colonial countries in Africa, south of the Sahara, can compare in organizational activity with South Africa. The African National Congress, the South African Indian Congress, the South African Colored People's Organization are the dominant organizations among the three non-white groups. In 1952 Africans, Indians, and Colored united in a single move—the Defiance Campaign. For more than six months this non-violent civil disobedience movement was carried on. Although more than 9000 were arrested, this was a small portion of those who would have been willing to defy the government if there had been a call for wholesale resistance. But only picked and approved volunteers were allowed to participate. That the three non-white groups were able to organize and carry out this campaign with the background of bitterness and misunderstanding which separates these peoples from one another was no small accomplishment.

This Defiance Campaign greatly strengthened the African National Congress. It is impossible to get valid statistics on the growth of the ANC, but this campaign unquestionably awoke the masses in South Africa. Some close observers estimated that when it started in June 1952 there were no more than 5,000 members of the ANC. By the end of the year there were closer to 100,000! The ANC had become a genuine mass movement of potential revolt.

The ANC has not kept pace with its rapid development during 1952. It received widespread publicity both when the removal of Africans in the western areas of Johannesburg began and when the Bantu Education Act went into effect. It urged non-compliance with the law in each case, but did not receive mass support. Nevertheless the cooperation of the three non-white organizations has been continued. The major vehicle of their cooperation has been the Congress Of the People. This cooperation reached

Throatcutting In Capetown

Mrs. Y. asked her houseboy whether he would really cut her throat. According to her, he was rather hurt and replied gravely: "No, madame, I should not cut your throat. The boy from next door would do that, and I should cut the throat of his madame."

—REGINALD REYNOLD: in *Cairo to Cape Town*

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its climax in June 1955 when the Congress was held and a Freedom Charter adopted which called for a basic change in the structure of South African life—freedom of organization, opposition to apartheid, rights of labor, an end to the pass laws, etc.

A third factor is the air of impending tragedy which permeates the whole South African atmosphere. Almost any South African of any color, when asked what will happen in the next few years in his country, will say: "Bloodshed." A multitude of people told me this when I was there—Afrikaners who believed in apartheid, Africans and Indians who were in the non-violent campaign, English-speaking South Africans who believed in segregation but opposed the present government. It is fear of the non-whites that makes it possible for the government to pass legislation through Parliament further binding the country to a restrictive racial policy. Educated Africans speak from the depths of frustration and bitterness toward the white man. They have little opportunity to enter the industrialized world built around them, except in the capacity of servant or unskilled worker. A letter received from a young African who had graduated from secondary school a few years earlier reads in part: "I used to feel sorry when I read of the death of white people in accidents. But now I feel glad. This will be just so many less white people we will have to deal with later."

There is a frustrated determination on the part of the non-whites, particularly those who have gone through school, to bring about drastic changes. There is an equal determination by most whites, especially Afrikaners, to impose further apartheid on the non-whites. These two forces are bound to clash. This makes for the sense of impending tragedy.

II

In spite of these factors which seem to make for revolt, an objective appraisal leaves one with the impression that in the near future there will be no basic change. Who can say with precision what the time span will be? Circumstances are pushing toward a revolution, to be sure, but one which cannot be consummated with any rapidity. I would suggest three reasons for this.

First, the Afrikaner Nationalists are firmly in control of the Government and cannot be effectively challenged by the United Party, the only opposition of any significance. An astute observer of South African affairs told me, "The only imminent 'revolution' in South Africa is a fascist one." The main support for the Nationalist Party comes from the Afrikaner people, those whose ancestors came primarily from Holland. The Nationalist Party came into power in 1948 with a majority of only 7 seats in Parliament, even though it did not win a majority of the popular vote. This is explained by the fact that the main strength of the United Party is in the urban areas where relatively fewer seats in Parliament are filled. Nationalist support is scattered throughout the country and dominates the rural areas where the greater number of seats in Parliament are filled.

Once in power, the Afrikaners used every available device to increase their majority in Parliament. The story of their maneuvers and chicanery, by which they gained a two-thirds majority in both Houses of Parliament, and

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a majority in the highest court of the land, has largely been told in the American press and must be familiar to readers of this journal; the result of those maneuvers and chicanery is that no political force can challenge their rule at present, and that no effective challenge can even be observed on the horizon.

A second reason why the status quo will be maintained for a time in South Africa is that resistance among the non-whites is not yet strong enough to challenge the Nationalist Party. No basic change can take place in South Africa through channels other than those the Africans create. The whites who are in the leadership of the Liberal Party, although people of conscience, are too much a part of the present cultural and economic pattern of life in South Africa to demand the revolutionary changes necessary. Just as the real drive for integration in the South of the United States had to come from Negroes before segregation could be effectively challenged, so in South Africa it is the African who must give driving power to the forces for change. He is the great mass of people. But he is politically handcuffed and has no means through ordinary legal procedure to bring about change; he is economically subservient. Still, the clue to the future lies with the African.

In 1952, when the Defiance Campaign began, many people thought this would be the beginning of a revolutionary period. But by early 1953 it became apparent that this was not the case. When the Criminal Laws Amendment Act was passed in January, no further effort was made to urge volunteers to violate the pass laws. The penalties were simply too stringent. At first, sentences for volunteers were comparatively light, those arrested being let off with payment of fines or light sentences. But when the potential fine became £500 and the sentence five years in prison, a person could not lightly join the campaign. The ANC was not ready for a showdown, at least by non-violent methods, and there was no chance of carrying on by violence. The campaign was suspended.

There have been other indications of the ANC's inability to engage in a full-scale challenge of the government. Under the Suppression of Communism Act, the principal African and Indian leaders have been banned from participation in any activities. Although these "banned" leaders have no doubt engaged in planning and strategy discussions behind closed doors, they have avoided any open defiance of the limitations placed upon them. This may be a necessary strategy at the moment, but no leader can expect the masses to follow where he will not go.

Since 1952 there have been some excellent opportunities for mass campaigns. One was when the government forced the removal of Africans from the western areas of Johannesburg in 1955. The ANC threatened widespread resistance. Actually the government's show of force with hundreds of police and armed soldiers kept the protest to a whisper. No family has yet refused to leave Sophiatown.

Another opportunity came in 1956 when the Bantu Education Act finally went into effect. Only in a few communities of the Transvaal was there direct disobedience. Some 7,000 youngsters stayed out of school in compliance with their parents' wishes. The

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government promptly took reprisal action by declaring that these children, together with any teachers who had cooperated with the protest, were henceforth banned from the educational system. Later, as it became evident that this type of protest would not spread, the government rescinded its ruling.

These facts about the weakness of the non-white organizations are pointed out not to ridicule or to blame. Virtually all leaders among the Africans recognize the necessity for some kind of revolutionary change. However, at this moment in history, the people are not ready for the kind of struggle required to effect such changes.

A third reason why things will remain relatively the same in South Africa is the absence of immediate channels for help from outside the country. Conceivably support could come from India, or from countries such as the Gold Coast and Nigeria. It is also conceivable that the Soviet Union would like to give evidence of its support for the revolutionary potential in South Africa. But there is nothing that smacks of a genuine pan-African movement on the African continent today; there is virtually no communication between British and French areas; and even the countries close to self-government are so embroiled in their own internal problems that they have no resources left with which to concern themselves in inter-African affairs.

At present international Communism cannot be considered an active or immediate threat in Africa. The Communist Party has no real strength anywhere on the continent. In South Africa not only is it effectively banned but it has an infinitesimal following. There is, of course, Communist influence in such movements as the Congress of the People. But the Communist movement can grow only to the extent that nationalism itself lags among the African people. Leaders like Chief Luthuli recognize the Communist danger. One reason why the African leaders do not want to allow whites to join the ANC is precisely because they recognize this would open the doors for more effective Communist infiltration.

III

Undeniably pressures are making for change in South Africa today. But during the foreseeable future, these pressures will be contained by the overwhelming power of the South African government. Hope for change lies along the following briefly stated lines.

- One, the trend toward increased urbanization and industrialization in South Africa will unquestionably continue. Between 1912 and 1953 the percentage of national income provided by manufacturing industry has grown from 6.9 to 25 per cent. This is three times as fast as that of Britain a hundred years ago. Between 1936 and 1951 the South African urban population has grown from 1,240,000 to 2,310,000. Apartheid policy cannot reverse industrialization and the need for African labor. The increasing integration of the African into the urban community and industry negates any effective apartheid. Further, African urbanization makes possible the growth of organizations, political and economic, which will be the instruments of change.
- Two, hope for change lies with the growth of resistance. The Defiance Campaign proved that the non-whites

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could unite in a concerted movement and that leadership could arise. The lessons of this campaign will not be forgotten.

• Three, hope lies with greater education. The Bantu Education Act cannot quench the thirst for learning. There are about 1,000,000 African youngsters in school now. Among a people who have little formalized training, education becomes a revolutionary factor. In South Africa, as elsewhere in Africa, the leaders of the national revolutionary movement are those who have received some education. There is ferment in South Africa because, compared with other parts of Africa, there is a relatively large group of educated leaders.

• Finally, there is hope because of the growth of world opinion against South African racism. Although the United Nations will not "intervene" in South African affairs, the General Assembly debates have brought South African policies to the attention of people otherwise unaware of what apartheid involves. And without indulging in any rosy idealizations, there is every reason to suppose that the continued trend of world affairs, particularly the rivalries between the two great power blocs, will increase the pressure upon South Africa and will multiply the voices crying "Shame!"

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"WE ARE BOUND TO STRUGGLE"

An Interview with Chief Luthuli, Head of the National Congress

In 1954 George Houser, then visiting South Africa, met Chief Albert J. Luthuli, present head of the African National Congress and, as such, an authoritative spokesman for large numbers of his countrymen. We are publishing here excerpts of an interview held with Chief Luthuli.

●

Q. *Chief Luthuli, can you tell me which group you are chief of?*

A. Until I was deposed I was, of course, chief of what is known as the Amakola tribe, in the Umvoti Mission Reserve, a community founded by the American-born missionary, Reverend Grout. These people, for over one hundred years, I think, have elected their own chief. They requested the government that they be given the right to elect their chief so that they might be able to elect people who are more or less in sympathy with Christian principles. They were established by a missionary and are more or less a Christian community.

Q. *How many people live in the community?*

A. We are 5,000 men, women and children, according to the last census.

Q. *When were you elected chief?*

A. In 1936.

Q. *You mentioned you had been deposed; what does this mean and why did it happen?*

A. Well, I was deposed round about 1952. The Government said that because of my activities in the African National Congress, especially in the non-violent passive defiance campaign that Congress was launching at the time, they would not have the chief participating. In fairness to the Government, I should say that I was called up to headquarters at Pretoria where I was interviewed by the Secretary for Native Affairs. He tried his best to reason with me and to find out why I was joining this movement. Then he gave me time to go and think whether or not I would be able to give up. After that time limit had expired, they asked what my decision was. I said to them: so far as I am concerned, I don't see any conflict between being Chief and being head of Congress. As Chief I am supposed to be the leader

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of my people, to lead them to liberty. As leader of the Congress I have got to lead my people to emancipation and to freedom...

Q. *I understand there was another aftermath of this. You have also been banned, have you not? What does banning mean?*

A. Since the African Congress, in alliance with the South African Congress (of Indians) and, lately, with the Colored organization and now also with the Congress of Democrats, has been pushing very hard along the political front, we find that the Government, using the laws of the land, employs a harsh hand by stopping people—certain leaders—from freely moving about. According to the Suppression of Communism Act, or the Criminal Laws Amendment Act, the Government has power to do that. I am banned under the Criminal Laws Amendment Act. (Incidentally, those are Acts passed under Smuts: not acts of the Nationalist Party. This shows that the pattern has been the same throughout. The emphasis may be more now than it was then.) According to this law, the area in which a leader may or may not be is prescribed. For instance, now, in my present ban, I am only allowed within my own magisterial area, Lower Tugela.

Q. *About how large is this area?*

A. Well, in Stanger here we are not quite in the center, but I should think it would be about 15 miles to Tugela and 15 miles to Tonga; maybe about thirty miles across. I am restricted to this area. I could not move outside this area unless, of course, I was defiant. Incidentally, this is my second ban. I was banned in 1953, but that expired in June. They put it on again in July, for two years now instead of one year. But in the first ban I was restricted to certain towns. I was still free to go about in some areas and I suppose it was because I did go to these areas they have now limited me strictly to my own area. According to the Act, they can still remove me from this area and put me practically anywhere in South Africa. They could take me to the wilds of Zulu, for example, just leave me there and say: now you can't go beyond this particular area!

Q. *Do you think a time might come in the struggle here when those who have been banned under either of these acts might refuse to cooperate with it?*

A. At the present time, those who are banned are cooperating. I hope a time will come when those of us who are banned will refuse to cooperate. Of course, that does raise the question which has been asked by some people: why aren't the leaders defying the ban?

There are several considerations. One is the matter of discipline itself. There is a feeling in the leadership that we are very much limited in numbers, and probably still have a lot of organizational groundwork to do amongst our people. It may not be the best thing to have us locked behind bars and leave our people. There is a difference of opinion on this, but I think this is the present mood within the circle of leaders. As a matter of discipline, we wouldn't, for instance, now welcome any leader who, just on his own, would say: "Well, all right, I am defying, you know." That may come later.

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Q. *Do you think relations between the Europeans and the non-Europeans are deteriorating at the present time? What is the trend?*

A. I think that, on the whole, the trend indicates deterioration, unfortunately. Of course, I realize there is a fund of goodwill being shown by some Europeans, for instance. There are those who take a real interest in the welfare of the people. But this is mere "ambulance" work.

Q. *What is the aim of the Government at present? What are they are trying to do? Do they think they can maintain a democratic system even within the European community?*

A. As for the Europeans, my impression is this: the Afrikaner, having gained ascendency and power, is not going to give much of a hearing to the other white groups if they don't toe the line. To that extent, I think democracy might be on the way out in South Africa. There is no question about it. The present rulers are determined men, apparently prepared to take a stand against anyone who doesn't toe their line.

Q. *What may possibly change this trend? What do you think the place of non-violence in the picture will be?*

A. I have become a man who has embraced non-violence. Certainly insofar as non-whites are concerned I do not see any other way we may employ in order to achieve our objective of freedom. I cannot see that the white man in this country will ever freely grant us franchise rights. What success we will have in that way will, of course, depend on the extent to which we are able to educate our people. Not merely arouse our people, but educate our people to see that the right goal of man is freedom . I think there lies our hope.

The Baas

Our policy is that the Europeans must stand their ground and must remain Baas [master] in South Africa. If we reject the *Herrenvolk* idea and the principle that the white man cannot remain Baas, if the franchise is to be extended to the non-Europeans, and if the non-Europeans are developed on the same basis as the Europeans, how can the Europeans remain Baas? Our view is that in every sphere the European must retain the right to rule the country and to keep it a white man's country.

—From a speech of J. G. Strijdom, Prime Minister of South Africa, quoted in the London *Observer*, December, 1952.

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Peter Abrahams, South African novelist, author of *Mine Boy, Tell Freedom,* and, most recently, *A Wreath for Udomo,* was interviewed for DISSENT by Stanley Plastrik during a recent visit to the United States. Mr. Abrahams now makes his home in England.

SOUTH AFRICA: ORDEAL AND HOPE

Peter Abrahams

I

Question: Mr. Abrahams, what does Africa mean to you?

Answer: It means the people I know most intimately, the people with whom I grew up. It's emotional; subjective. It is one of those complex things that goes into the making of a man. In relation to the rest of the world, the African has been a rather special kind of person. In your Western world, less than a person in so many ways; in all ways. And for that reason my orientation has been toward a kind of greater-African feeling. Africa means to me a challenge and a dream as well as the place where I was born. It is the last great uncommitted continent and it is going to have a tremendous influence on the future shape of the world.

Q.: When you speak of your larger concept of Africa, this subjective concept of Africa, do you include the entire Continent?

A.: Emotionally it's Africa south of the Sahara. Intellectually, recent events north of the Sahara have tended to make for a widening of this orientation, but the emotional attachment is still to the south.

Q.: Can you tell us something about African nationalism? Is it confined to the cities and the intellectuals? And the African people, the masses—what does nationalism mean to them?

A.: It began among the city intellectuals. Naturally, logically, as it should and would. The basis of African nationalism is, of course, European nationalism. Nationalism was invented not by the Asians or Africans but by the Europeans. Take any African boy. In order to make him an efficient operator as an office boy, in the white man's kitchen, in industry, in the mines, you need to give him a certain modicum of learning. This process of education does, as it were, cut his umbilical cord from the tribal past and creates a new kind of man. His education in British Africa and in French Africa has been an edu-

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cation based on British or French mores and values. The Rights of Man, *habeas corpus,* and Western individualism all come in the picture. This chap looks at the world in which he lives through the new eyes of his Western-oriented education and decides that his status is less than it should be. So he turns to the larger amorphous mass and says to them, "Look my brothers, this is how a man should live—by Western values. But see how we really live." He transmits nationalism down, but it begins with the intellectual, generally in the cities, generally missionary-trained.

What is the nature of this nationalism? I should say that the essence of this nationalism is self-awareness, self-realization and the desire to have a place in the world that would fulfill the needs of a dignified modern man.

Q.: How do you explain the relationship between the breakup of tribalism and the growth of nationalism? It's not a cause and effect relationship, is it?

A.: Well, in a sense it is. It's one of these matters of thin, linking lines. For instance, and it's a tricky one, nationalism in the Union of South Africa has hardly any tribal content at all. The reason for this is simply that South Africa has not been blessed or cursed, take it any way you like, by the policy of indirect rule. Result: the nationalist struggle in South Africa resembles any nationalist struggle elsewhere in the world. What they would do, the means by which they would conduct the nationalist struggle, is a formally recognized pattern of political activities. You'd have your strike, your boycott and, if it came to violence, you would have railway lines blown up and other things like that.

In the British set-up, on the other hand, indirect rule—Kenya is a classical example—has been revered. The assumption behind it is to rule through the established native authority. In the case of Kenya tribalism had broken down to the point where it had already gone beyond chieftainship, where you had rule by a council of elders, by age groups, which was a stage away from the absolute power of the chief and his circle of courtiers. But in order to carry on this policy of indirect rule which, from the British point of view, had the advantage that a very small number of Englishmen controlled a vast area of land, the system of chieftainship among the Kikuyu people was reinstituted where it had already broken down. They therefore encouraged tribalism, treating it as something static, a pattern of culture unlike all other patterns of culture that change and evolve in terms of the needs of people.

Q.: Do you see any possibility of a fusion of tribal modes of organization with the imported Western forms of political organization, or is it really a case of one supplanting the other in the course of time? Would there be any new or creative political results arising from the meeting of the old and the new?

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A.: You know, the old is never completely eliminated. I mean that for political purposes you denounce; you denounce even when you've destroyed. Yet you take over much of the old. Certainly the structure of tribalism isn't going to be completely destroyed or pushed out. It was a pattern of culture. It did, in a certain time, fulfill man's deepest needs, answer his most profound emotional anxieties. Some features of tribalism are extraordinarily good. One of the important differences between Westernism and tribalism is that you didn't have the neurotic in the tribal society because it was so organized that there were no outsiders. Before you became an outsider you were destroyed. Either that's good or it isn't good. There are other features such as the attitude to family which, to a large extent, is breaking down in the West. The uglier features of tribalism, such as the fatalism which says that man really has no choice over what happens to him, that it is all the result of magic and the death that is in the water and all about us and that we might as well resign ourselves to this—the very fact of nationalism, is sweeping that aside. Also, the conflict against imperialism is acting as a unifying factor, assaulting tribal exclusiveness, so that in Nigeria, for example, the Ibo, the Yoruba, the Hausa, at a certain level are cooperating and forgetting that "you were my slaves once upon a time." Whether this anti-imperialism will hold together when the foreign rule is gone, is one of the great problems for those of us concerned with the future of Africa.

One more thing. Ideally, I imagine we would all agree that a strong, healthy, industrially efficient Africa would be more desirable than a discontented, miserably poor Africa. And yet, in terms of Westernization, a certain attitude has been created in the African mind by the way Westerners, and Western socialists as well, have talked about this extraordinary thing called Western European civilization. It is copyrighted, signed, sealed and delivered by a man who is blond, blue-eyed, the real Nordic type. This is seen as something so exclusively West European, and is rammed down African throats to such an extent that, in sheer self-defense, they react violently to it. I've seen quite a few of our very best thinkers compelled to defend a position they would not normally want to defend. For example, in the eyes of the Kenya settlers, the Kikuyu are a savage, barbaric people; they had nothing until Western Europeans came with their civilization, including a little packet like the hydrogen bomb. Jomo Kenyatta, the leader of the Kenya Africans, then feels compelled to say: "All right, so you have values; but we have values too. You have a past that you boast about; good, we have a past too." Kenyatta finds himself defending and justifying, out of a sense of honor, the old tribalism that in another context he might not quite want to defend and justify. This is a psychological point perhaps, but it seems to me tremendously important.

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II

Q.: In your opinion, what goals does African nationalism have? What comes after the victory of nationalism? I wish you would also touch on the question of the African nationalist leadership.

A.: Well now, what goals do they have in fact? This is, of course, one of our very serious internal problems. Africa is on the move and we know it. Africa is in a hurry going somewhere and we know it; but we don't quite know where. The goals are not clearly defined. At the moment they are negative—almost inevitably. Nkrumah says self-government. That is as far as African nationalism has really reached. I think that in South Africa some of our leaders have gone further and have talked about a socialist South Africa. Yet, many others are conservative nationalists. In any case, the goals aren't clearly defined beyond desiring a democratic South Africa, with minority rights for whites.

On the West Coast of Africa, Nkrumah's great dream is a United States of West Africa which would take in Nigeria, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, Gambia, the Cameroons, Liberia—this is his dream. On the other hand, one can't say that the Liberians necessarily agree with that dream or that the French West African Negroes would necessarily agree with it, but Nkrumah has an end in view. In East Africa I should say that the Kikuyu, in the expression of Kenyatta, have talked in terms of "the land is ours"; we are not going to kill the white man, but either he stays on our terms or he gets out. The point is this: "The land is ours and we are going to run it." They talk of Kenya as an African state. In Central Africa, African leaders of the new Central African Federation have clearly opted for a multi-racial society. In the Union of South Africa, of course, the African National Congress has made pronouncements to the end that it wants a situation in which a man's color would be something completely accidental and ability would be decisive. Ideally, South Africa is going to be a multi-racial society.

Now about leadership. It is my opinion that the most sophisticated leadership on the African continent is to be found in the Union of South Africa, and that is logical. They've had three hundred years of encounter with this problem. The result, as with their sophistication, is that possibly they are too reasonable, not as angry, as extreme as the situation might demand. On the other hand, they are extraordinarily constructive. They are always seeking out new techniques of fighting. They tried, as you know, a campaign of defiance in 1952. This was something which I would have said was impossible in the African context. Africans are not people who are inclined, like the Indians, to submit to beatings-up because of moral conviction, and non-violent resistance is something unrelated to anything in the African past. An African gets a clout; he wants to clout right back and he wants to give two or three! The trying of this Gandhi technique and,

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what's more, its limited success, is something unique in the Union of South Africa. Of course, we have upwards of half a million Indians. You know that Gandhi first tried out his technique in South Africa. The Indians there have made common cause with the Africans over recent years and have influenced the thinking of the African leadership quite a bit.

Leadership in Kenya is based largely on Jomo Kenyatta who is now alone, fenced in and cut off in the Northern territories, and for the moment ineffective. The African leaders sitting in the Kenyan Legislative Council are really compromised in the eyes of Africans. For the African this is a war. When your country is engaged in a war and your leaders sit in councils on the other side, rightly or wrongly, you say those leaders are traitors.

In Central Africa the situation is more fluid. The Rhodesian African National Congress has a number of leaders but none has yet emerged very clearly. And Moral Re-Armament—that very percinious Buchmanite doctrine—is at work among the African leaders in Central Africa to quite an extent. As you go over to the West Coast Nkrumah is the most outstanding figure; Nkrumah knows where he's going, and is determined to get there, but he has some pretty powerful people against him. They are the citified intellectual elite related to the Ashanti—people who could possibly lead, shall we say, the counter-revolution.

Q.: As American democrats and socialists, what should we know, what should we especially know about South Africa?

A.: The very first thing you should know is that South Africa stands squarely opposed to everything that makes you democrats and socialists in America. There are no two ways about that.

The South Africa pattern is, for the overwhelming majority of the people, a dictatorship no different from Mussolini's; no different from Hitler's. The Jews were a minority. The Africans are a majority. These, it seems to me, are the essential things. As long as you know that it is on your head and that you will reap what you sow, I myself should feel happy.

As for what you could do, I can only speak for myself. As I understand you, your history, it is revolutionary history. You were born out of the Revolution.

Q.: We like to forget about that!

A.: All right. We would like to remind you of that. We would like to remind you of the Declaration that brought your nation into existence and to give you fair notice that if revolutions were good enough to bring the United States of America into existence we don't see why they shouldn't be good enough to bring freedom to Africa. Either you go along with this thing or not. And if you are opposed to it, there are other people who will offer us the hand of friendship. In straightforward political terms we have no choice but to accept aid

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wherever it comes from. The one thing that is clear is that we are determined to be free just as you were determined to be free.

In practical, concrete terms you could back the African-Asian bloc on its policy toward South Africa. You may say I'm an African nationalist and extremist, but if you can intervene in Korea no amount of smartness is going to convince the Africans that you can't, if so minded, intervene in this case of a manifestly evil regime.

III

Q.: How do you explain the contradiction between South Africa's industrial growth, bringing with it the integration of the African worker into the economic life of the country and the doctrine and practice of apartheid? For example, in the N.Y. Times *recently there was a report that the Negro and white labor pool in South Africa is exhausted and that still further African elements must be brought into the pool. How can they practice racism and at the same time push their economic development?*

A.: Well, now, you know that is one you ought to ask Mr. Strijdom. He's the guy who should answer.

Q.: But would you want to comment on that?

A.: To this extent only. The industrialists, the people concerned with industry, have over the years become increasingly aware of the uneconomic character of the industrial color bar. It costs the country an enormous amount of money. Example: In the copper belt the Anglo-American Mining Company has found it costly to pay the white miner £100 to £150 a month. That's high money even by American standards. The black miner gets something like £60 a year in cash and kind. £100 a month and beautiful houses built for one, and £60 or thereabouts a year in cash and kind for the other. Now, this is uneconomical. If Anglo-American can get a black miner doing for double what he is getting now, the same job which a white man is doing for this fabulous sum, obviously it would be more profitable to employ the black miner. This is reasonable economics, and at bottom business knows no color or frontier. And so they proposed, making it sound very good, that certain fields should be opened to the more advanced African workers. They also offered the white man a guarantee of job security for quite a long period.

But the white miner saw the thin edge of the wedge and so he came back with—and this was the first time this slogan has been raised in multi-racial Africa—"the rate for the job." If you are going to give a black this job then give him the same rate of pay you give me. This is a beautiful checkmate. It's a political trick and, on the face of it, it looks good. There you have capital being more "progressive" than your white worker.

Q.: What perspective do you see in the struggle over color in South Africa?

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A.: The prospects as I see them are not very good. There are people who tend to be emotional, sentimental, wishful, all the things we are when we don't want to look something ugly in the face. A sort of optimism, hopefulness, brotherly love, "Cry the Beloved Country'ism." I don't see it that way. It seems to me that the forces of white nationalism are going to fight to the death. The largest police force in the entire African continent is in the Union of South Africa, which also has the biggest army on the continent, and the most efficient and effective air force—and the enemy isn't outside. The guns are pointed inward. These people are armed, prepared and determined, quite ruthlessly, to hold on to what they have at any cost.

They are not interested in the future. One leading white nationalist, when it was suggested to him that "you can't win this thing," declared, "Look, we will win in our time; we are not concerned about the future." So that here you have people frankly indifferent to their responsibility toward the future. There's no "romance" about this, no possible change of heart. Ultimately there is going to be a showdown as violent as anything can be. *The thing is for us not to be drawn into the showdown before we are ready,* before we're sure we can win because if this is going to be something we do by ourselves, well, if we don't win, there's going to be an awful period of darkness for the African people in South Africa. I think myself that the next twenty years should see the resolution. It could be earlier, it could be more hopeful, if those people in the outside world who say they believe in democracy and freedom live by their beliefs.

Q.: Where does democratic South Africa look for allies and friends in the world? What confidence does it have in this search?

A.: I have been on the outside of the Union of South Africa. I go and I come back so that my view on this...

Q.: If I may interrupt, are you freely able to go back whenever you want?

A.: As freely as influence and fear of publicity allows one. I'm never allowed to stay more than a month but up to last year I could go in and come out.

Q.: You're not afraid of going back?

A.: Well, I wouldn't say that I go back with happy feelings. I go back because I must keep touch, because I have things to do, people to see and so on. Oh, it's hell. Going back is hell. Every time...

Now let's see, where were we? You see in South Africa itself the people struggling there have concrete things to do. Let's take one example.

Some youth festival in Peking invited the Secretary-General of the African National Congress, and Walter Sisulu went. He traveled to England, was met by only a few interested individuals, then across to France, again a few interested individuals, then across Europe until he

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got behind the Iron Curtain. Here he became "the representative of his people" and was treated as such. Moscow: he was again received as the representative of his people, and so across the Soviet Union to China where he was once more the representative of his people and was accorded the respect that the representative of a great people is entitled to. "This is the Secretary-General of the African National Congress." Sisulu came back and told what happened. The press in London now took an interest, negatively. The initiative was on the other side. They now ask him the usual sort of tricky questions. He refused to talk. He said, I didn't stay in the Soviet Union long enough to be able to form an opinion, but in China I stayed there, I got around, I was treated as a person, an interest was shown in conditions of my country, of my people, such as I have not encountered anywhere in the Western world. This is a pointer in the wind, an important pointer. India; you know India's record. I should say that the people of South Africa feel, rightly or wrongly, that their friends are to be found in Asia mainly. That is the way they are looking.

IV

Q.: What organizations exist for South Africans to express themselves?

A.: The most important is, of course, the African National Congress, our nationalist organization *par excellence.* It isn't perfect, it isn't what many of us would like it to be, but it is the National Congress and it is evolving and growing. It is, I am convinced, going to be the instrument of liberation, ultimately. It has become part of our lives, almost as much as the Indian National Congress became a part of the Indian national life.

Q.: Are there different groupings within it?

A.: Within Congress, of course, you have three wings: first, the left wing led by the Youth League. The Youth League is currently the most influential group within Congress. Then you have the more moderate wing and a conservative wing. The differences that you find within the British Labor Party, broadly, will be found within the African National Congress. Left wing does not mean Communist. On the other hand, there are individual Communists inside Congress just as there are individual black chauvinists.

Q.: Are there any other organizations worth mentioning?

A.: Yes, the second organization is the All-African Convention, which is in opposition to Congress and under the leadership of a group of intellectuals in the Cape, with Trotskyist orientation. It has possibly some of the most brilliant political theorists in the country in its leadership but has made no impact at all—well, to say not at all would be to go very far—but very little impact on the life and struggle of the African people largely because it has evolved a blanket technique of boycott. It boycotts everything.

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Q.: Are these white intellectuals?

A.: Oh, no! They are Cape Colored men and the technique of the boycott means: don't do anything and don't jeopardize your job. The leadership is mainly teachers. For instance, they boycotted the campaign of defiance of unjust laws. However, recently there has come into existence a Colored people's organization. As you probably know, the policy of divide-and-rule has been so successfully conducted in South Africa that for a very long time the Colored people—that's euphemism for half-castes—have been convinced that one day they will enjoy—I am quoting this, it's the South African expression—the "privilege of having white blood in their veins." They, in common with the whites, have tended to look down on the natives. But really, second in importance to the African National Congress is the South African Indian Congress, which has just about the finest leadership in the country.

The South African Indian, dating back to the days of Gandhi, has had a long history of political struggle. Round about 1939—until that year the Indian organization was mainly in the hands of Indian merchants who conducted their struggle as something completely separate from the Africans—Dr. Y. M. Dadoo challenged the old Indian leadership and won. He brought the South African Indian Congress into this greater fold which, in the 1939 period, was called the non-European United Front and which today is in effect a committee in which the leaders of the African National Congress, South African Indian Congress and the Colored peoples' organizations work and plan together.

Fairly recently the whites under Alan Paton formed a Liberal Party, a political party which would accept membership without regard to race and color. One of the anomalies of this is the fact that this party is going to stand for Parliamentary elections. Now, no black can vote in the ordinary Parliamentary elections. No black can be a candidate. To be an inter-racial party and support this segregationist parliamentary system is a contradiction which the white liberals have not yet resolved in their own minds. Certainly I myself don't think they'll make any kind of impression on the Africans until their party arrives at a position where it will say that to participate in any way in this kind of thing is to approve it.

Q.: How would you reorganize South Africa?

A.: In this fashion, I think. First of all we would by legislative process introduce, because it is a central emotional point, universal adult suffrage without regard to race or color. We would also introduce, for a five-year period, seats reserved for the whites, to bridge the gap of hate, so that a minimum number of seats would be there for white representatives whether they get elected or not. This is important in terms of my own people. They must get over this thing.

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The legacy of injustice logically and naturally will lead to hate. After the period of five years, the white South African will be reassured that it doesn't matter a damn whether he is in Parliament or not. He will have his security, and his skills, insofar as they exist, will be used for the good of the country.

Then—and this is fundamental—I would divert as much money as I could to establish a free and compulsory educational system for all at the primary level.

Equally fundamental, I would revise the land laws by which 13 per cent of the land can be owned by 10½ millions and the other 87 per cent by 2½ millions. That, I think, would take us up to two terms of office. Then we could start thinking of other things.

Q.: The general objective of course being a multi-race...?

A.: The general objective being a multi-racial society. You notice I said nothing about the abolition of the color bar because, if I am reorganizing society on these terms, the social color bar would collapse. It just will. We are a nation there already. We are the only country South of the Sahara where the sense of nationhood already exists.

Q.: Your land reorganization policy: What will be its political and economic orientation? Will it be laissez-faire, *socialism, or the African basis of communal ownership?*

A.: Oh, no! We shall, I hope, treat the land as a national asset. We would not be able to go back to the tribal way of holding, but would probably institute a land system by which we could say to all the landless peasants: Look, you can have 5 acres—that'll be the minimum—5 acres to cultivate. If you produce enough annually, then the land is yours on a sort of freehold basis, a leasehold basis in perpetuity which your son can inherit. It's a bastardization of both the freehold and the African system. If you cope successfully with this piece of land in the first year, you can have another piece; another 5 acres. Side by side with this will be agricultural experts, specialists in land conservation, etc.

V

Q.: Why do you live in England now?

A.: In a sense it amounts to escapism. In the sense that any man, if he had the choice, would prefer to live in a free society as against an unfree society. I should imagine you would do exactly the same. That is one thing. The other thing, of course, is that if you operate directly as a political animal, leading a mass movement, or if you are a trade unionist, you obviously can't do it from afar. But if you are concerned, as I am, with publicizing, writing, trying to interpret, then South Africa becomes terribly confining because there's a curtain between me and the outside world which there isn't in Eng-

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land. England is still the clearing house of ideas on the whole question of imperialism so that I feel, rightly or wrongly, that I can reach a very, very much wider audience operating from England than I can from South Africa.

Q.: When I was last in England I met some people from Johannesburg—radical white students who were sub rosa *members of the nationalist movement. They described life there and then they asked me my opinion: should they go back? What would you have said?*

A.: It's a difficult situation. It's a particularly difficult one for the white South African student whose views have changed because, when he gets back, he catches hell as nobody else does. There are apparently quite a few of them, as a matter of fact. They make a track to my home. The worst thing to be in South Africa is a white man who doesn't subscribe to the mores. They suffer as we have never suffered.

Q.: When and how did you first discover yourself in relation to your people and the struggle for freedom?

A.: Obviously, you haven't read my autobiography.* It's all there. Now that's a naughty answer!

Q.: But a deserved one. Will Africa win freedom in your lifetime?

A.: Yes sir, she will! That is, if my lifetime goes on to another quarter of a century, which it should.

And then, of course, there will be the greater problems of freedom, the real and creative problems. Now we only have negative problems. We have to fight our way through the woods to start making a positive contribution to the world. I think there's an enormous one to make, if we plan correctly now and dream keenly. Yes, Africa will be free. I have no doubt about it.

* *Tell Freedom*, A. A. Knopf.

Definition

apartheid: origin, Afrikaans; meaning separateness; pronunciation, apart — hate.

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The two articles that appear below continue the discussion of the recent events in Russia that began in the last issue of Dissent. *We have been trying to present a variety of interpretations that fall within the general outlook of our magazine, and we hope to print other articles on this subject in later issues. Mr. Lowenthal's article, which has appeared in several European journals, among them* Preuves, Der Monat *and* Encounter, *is here reprinted with his permission.*

NOTES ON THE RUSSIAN TURN

Irving Howe

Which shall one stress—the extent to which important changes have occurred or the extent to which Russian society under Khrushchev remains continuous with that under Stalin? It depends on the frame of discourse. In trying to foresee the consequences of the Russian turn one must clearly focus on that which is new. In debating with those radicals who seem tempted to soften their opposition to the Russian dictatorship, one must stress that it remains a totalitarian or authoritarian society, qualitatively different from anything that merits the name of socialism. We must anticipate and struggle against a New Appeasement.

In these notes I make no claim to be presenting a rounded analysis of the Russian events; my only interest, at the moment, is in indicating what seem to me the premises of a socialist response to these events.

• The present regime in Russia is perhaps the first in modern history to be led by self-confessed murderers. There has been no lack of brutal governments in the past, nor even of rulers who confessed their crimes after losing power. But is there any precedent for a dictatorial junta trying to consolidate its rule and proclaim its virtue by announcing that it participated in outrages that resulted in the murder of millions of human beings?

Some people now say that such considerations are irrelevant, merely an indulgence in moralizing. It is possible to say that, and possible to say it in the name of History or the Future or Industrialization; but it is not possible for a *socialist* to say it.

• Khrushchev and his colleagues now admit, yes, we participated in outrages, but we could not help ourselves, we were Stalin's captives, a word of dissent would have meant death...

It will not do. Khrushchev is speaking to European and Asian Communists, party militants trained to accept death upon orders. One can imagine

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a German Communist worker thinking to himself: *If I was ready to face the gas chambers, why was not Khrushchev prepared to risk his life too?*

But even in Khrushchev's terms, his "defense" is absurd. Does anyone suppose that as the chief executioner in the Ukrainian purge—the worst in all Russia!—Khrushchev failed to show "initiative" of his own.

• Some people, the amoral *realpolitiker* of "the left," say: "Yes, the purges were horrible, Stalin a butcher; but let us forget the past, let us be hopeful of the future."

No; not so fast. We socialists—though not, of course, we alone—cannot afford to have such short memories. *The past is still here.* The "excesses" of Stalinism have been partly removed, but the socio-political system that produced these "excesses" remains.

And here, indeed, was the most shallow and deceitful aspect of Khrushchev's secret speech to the Twentieth Party Congress, which has now been made public by the State Department. At no point did he even ask: how could these monstrous things have arisen? what was the social basis of Stalin's crimes? to what extent were these crimes "inherent" in a society totally without freedom? Such questions Khrushchev did not and could not ask, for to ask them would mean to imperil the basis of his own absolutist rule. Khrushchev attacked Stalin's repressions and murders as "unnecessary," as directed against the wrong people at the wrong time; but at no point did he challenge the *system* of socio-political authoritarianism which made them possible. The active terror of Stalin, as Lewis Coser put it in the last issue of DISSENT, has been replaced by Khrushchev's "terror in being" or terror in reserve. Those who would forget this imperil the moral foundations of their socialist or liberal belief.

• If there were a healthy socialist movement in the world today, it would by now have undertaken a furious offensive against the Communist parties. Particularly in such countries as France and Italy, it would be bombarding the Communist militants with messages such as this: "Look, friends, every accusation made by the anti-Stalinist left has either been vindicated or is likely to be vindicated tomorrow. How can you continue to belong to a movement that supported such bestiality for decades?"

So a healthy socialist movement would speak. But how can the French socialists undertake a moral offensive against the Communists when Guy Mollet is busy directing the annihilation of Algerian nationalism?

• It would be a great error if we did not insist upon reminding people that we were right—whatever our shade of socialist or radical opinion, we who for thirty bitter years kept up the fight against the lies of Stalinism. Modesty or immodesty is irrelevant here: there is a deep moral-political necessity for keeping the record clear. And let us remind the intellectual apologists for Stalinism, men like Frederick Schuman and Corliss Lamont, what it was that they spent decades in saying—lest they now continue to say it for Stalin's successors.

• The past is still here. Far more admissions must be wrung from the Kremlin; Khrushchev and his cronies must be forced to tell the truth about the Moscow trials and Trotsky's murder and much else.

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Those who do not respect the past will always be ready to defile the future.

• A little historical justice would also be appropriate. When Trotsky wrote that Stalin was inclined toward anti-Semitism, when he raised the possibility that Stalin had murdered his wife, even veteran anti-Stalinists felt a little embarrassed, suggesting to one another that the "Old Man" was running away with himself. Well, Trotsky was right. The "wildest" charges he made against the regime have now been show to be literally correct. Nothing that any anti-Communist ever charged against the Stalin regime can even approach the horror of Khrushchev's revelations. But there is a profound difference between speaking up in 1936 and admitting part of the truth in 1956—though even Khrushchev's admissions are couched in fundamental falsehood, such as his effort to make Beria, one of his cronies of yesterday, into the scapegoat for murders in the responsibility for which he, Khrushchev, shares.

• One of the more terrible disclosures that has recently been leaked out of eastern Europe is that the Stalin regime destroyed the whole Yiddish cultural community. The *Morning Freiheit,* Yiddish Communist daily in New York, reprinted on April 10 an "historical document" from the April 4 issue of *Folks-Shtimme,* the Yiddish Communist paper in Warsaw. This report, which admits the existence of wholesale anti-Semitism in Russia, lists the many Yiddish writers who were murdered by the "Beria gang." (As it happens, when most of them were executed, Beria was not even head of the secret police.) To measure the magnitude of this catastrophe, you should imagine a situation in which, for political reasons, Faulkner, Hemingway, Auden and Frost are summarily executed. It is no exaggeration to say that Yiddish literature suffered even greater blows from the Stalin regime than from the Nazis.

The *Freiheit,* in an April 15 editorial, declares that "on the agenda of the day is the need for a declaration *by the Russian government* concerning what has happened to the Jewish communal leaders and writers..." (Emphasis added.)

By all means, by all means.

• If the Khrushchev regime does close the labor camps (to replace them with "corrective labor colonies," whatever they might be), if it shortens the working day—that is to be welcomed; any diminution of human suffering is a positive good. But the fact that the regime grants concessions, whether to the workers or to the secondary strata of the bureaucracy, is no reason for modifying one's fundamental opposition.

Other repressive governments have also eased the lot of their subjects, and some have raised the standard of living far more than Khrushchev even promises to. Yet it is here that we encounter the political double-standard of "the left." One need not worry that an improvement of living standards in Spain will lead any radicals or liberals to qualify their opposition to Franco; but in the case of Russia...

• Much pointless discussion has been taking place as to whether the changes in Russia are due to strength or weakness—as if in actual social life these were not invariably intertwined. Strength, yes, in that the party leadership feels its institutional position to have been improved *vis a vis* other

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agencies in Russian society, and its political position improved by virtue of having provided the class of functionaries and officials with assurances that, if loyal, they can expect stability in office. But weakness, too, for is it conceivable that a political crisis of this magnitude could have occurred without there having been behind it an enormous social strain? The exact nature of this social strain we do not yet know, but it seems likely that it found its first major manifestations in the profound yearnings for a relief from terror that followed upon Stalin's death and also, perhaps, in a crisis of relations between the top leadership and the hundreds of thousands of secondary officials. In a totalitarian society every social layer, because it cannot express itself freely, presses in a thousand hidden ways against the layers immediately beneath and above it; and these pressures find their climax at the point where a political crisis creates a sudden disequilibrium in social life.

• What is most important in the Russian changes is that concessions or relaxation on top open at least the possibility of emboldened demands and resistance below. If those who have so cruelly exploited the Russian masses realize that terror cannot be extended indefinitely, if they realize that the stabilization and "legitimation" of their class requires a turn from terrorist methods—all this matters most of all because it provides a chink through which the long-repressed energies and hopes and resentments of the masses may break through.

For it is here, one may suggest, that the regime has come up against the problem that besets all dictatorships and, in the long run, seems beyond solution. Terror and repression create demoralization and weariness, even among those who rule; new elements in the upper strata, particularly those concerned with industrial production and indifferent to ideology, find indirect ways to express their yearning for stability *within* the privileged classes; the top leadership, for reasons still to be fully explored, gives the signal for a limited relaxation—but at what point can this process be stopped? Does not a bit of relaxation stimulate an appetite (as, apparently, in Poland) for a great deal more of freedom? Is it not clear that Russian rulers are caught in a dilemma: either risk allowing the present trend to get out of hand, which means to risk their own power, or start tightening up once more, which means to risk a reversion to personal dictatorship? Every time the circle of those who participate in making decisions is widened, the regime runs the danger that this process will take on a momentum of its own, or that minority factions within the leadership will try, in their own interests, to involve still larger strata of the population in the life of politics. There are ways of handling this problem in the short run; but not, I think, in the long run.

That is why Russian policy already shows *new* contradictions. The unions are urged in the party press to put up a good "tussle"—but suppose some workers venture to go on strike? The "cult of the individual" is attacked, yet *Pravda* hastens to denounce those "immature persons" who use intra-party discussions as a "pretext for fundamental criticisms of the party."

• Nothing is left to the defenders of the Russian dictatorship but the most paltry of arguments—the argument in

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the name of industrialization. I recently read an account of the effort by a Young Communist leader in this country to justify his continued support of Russia. He barely had the conviction to advance the usual Communist claims; in the end he fell back—irony of ironies!—on a vulgarization of the weakest Trotskyist argument for defending the "workers state," namely, the rapidly increasing rate of industrialization in Russia. Yet, to be honest, was he so very different from those authoritarians of the left who, while not Communist, think that to refer knowingly to charts of technological advance is to put forward a particularly Marxist argument?

Much more will have to be said about this, since it will prove to be the main argument of the New Appeasement, but for the moment it is enough to quote from Miss Jane Degras who has written with admirable conciseness:

> Russian output in 1955 gave little more than 1 metre of woolen cloth and one pair of footwear per head of population; the 'housing space' per head of the urban population was roughly 4 square metres (in 1953) compared with 12 in Greece and 16 in Italy, among the lowest in European countries. In their own Marxist terms, *the "rate of exploitation" of the working class is rising.* There is nothing magical in the high rate of economic development—it is a function of the gap between production and consumption. The process of primitive accumulation of capital, to which Marx devoted the most readable and biting chapters in *Capital,* has been illustrated as never before in Soviet history of the last twenty-five years, (*The Twentieth Century,* April 1956.)

• So far, the best political response to the pretensions of Khrushchev and his colleagues has come from the British Labor Party. At the now-famous dinner Khrushchev was taught a lesson in the elements of democracy, and it was splendid that on this issue both right and left wings of the British Labor Party—both George Brown and Aneurin Bevan—united to press the socialist attack upon the Russian despots. At the end Khrushchev is quoted as having said: "Who is this George Brown? I didn't know such people existed. We haven't seen them in Russia for thirty years." That Khrushchev, while unquestionably a scoundrel and a murderer, is not a fool, is proven by the accuracy of his calculation.

Well, George Brown is probably a rather crude trade unionist who in many other contexts would provoke us to sharp disagreement. But when he and Bevan found themselves together, pressing Khrushchev for frank answers to blunt questions, they were speaking—I do not think this an exaggeration—for the bruised conscience of socialism.

• The Hungarian government has just announced that some imprisoned Social Democrats will be freed. Excellent. But this raises the crucial question: what will happen to these people if they resume Social Democratic political activity? Since, in regard to a statified economy, it is nonsense to speak of economic freedom without political freedom, this question, I submit, brings us to the heart of the problem that sooner or later may disturb the life of the Communist countries far more than Khrushchev intends. Let us hope so.

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THE REPUDIATION OF STALINISM

Richard Lowenthal

> *"Nero, too, was a product of his epoch. Yet after he perished his statues were smashed and his name was scraped off everything. The vengeance of history is more terrible than the vengeance of the most powerful General Secretary. I venture to think that this is consoling."*
>
> (From Leon Trotsky's *Stalin*)

Ours is an epoch of unique historical events, most of them horrible. The Great Purge of 1936-8, with its liquidation of the old Bolshevik élite ordered in cold blood two decades after the revolution, and covered by a slimy flood of lies and forgeries was one of those events which revealed to a whole generation new vistas of man's capacity for evil. Despite the above comparison with the tyrant of another age, quoted from the book over whose unfinished manuscript Trotsky was battered to death by Stalin's emissary, the present massive denunciation of the initiator of those crimes and the "scraping off" of his falsifications from the record is no less unique; for this destruction of a myth is carried out by Stalin's closest surviving accomplices, within a system of one-party rule whose very existence depends on the pseudo-religion it incessantly purveys. This is indeed the authentic vengeance of History, working through blind agents who know not what they do.

Yet the spectacle of the spokesman of the Stalinist old guard disclosing in secret session the harm done to the Communist Party, the army, and the Soviet people by the "mistakes" of his late master, and naïvely trying to base his own authority and that of his colleagues on the fact that they were powerless to prevent what they now denounce, is only one aspect of the drama of this twentieth congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. There is also, on a vaster stage, the transformation in the lives and hopes of 200 million people who are now allowed to catch their first glimpse of the Promised Land after wandering through the desert for almost forty years—the return of hundreds of thousands of deportees from the labor camps, the rise in peasant incomes, the first steps towards a higher output of consumer goods and a shortening of working hours. And there is finally the position of the Soviet Union as a great world power with all that implies for the prospects of peace and war, and hence for the survival of us all.

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I

During the three years since Stalin's death, almost every criticism of Stalin's methods and policies now voiced has been implicitly foreshadowed in the action of his heirs. We have long noticed the drastic reduction in the adulation of the late dictator and in the references to his writing as a final source of authority, coupled with an increasing emphasis both on Lenin and on the collective wisdom of the Party. We have watched the sudden dismantling of Stalin's personal secretariat and the disappearance of its members, the calling off of the "doctors' purge" which had begun in the last months of his life, the systematic downgrading of the secret police and their subordination to the control of the Party, the quiet rehabilitation of some of the surviving old Bolsheviks as well as of victims of pre-war and post-war purges in some East European states. We have seen the reconciliation with Tito's Yugoslavia based on an open apology for the unjust accusations hurled against it and the economic injuries caused to it by the hostility of the Soviet bloc since 1948. And we have followed the silent liquidation of Stalin's gigantic projects for the "transformation of nature," the admission of the terrible backwardness of Soviet agriculture and the efforts to overcome it by various new policies, and the turning away from forced labor as the recruiting method for remote areas.

Up to now, however, all these reforms and policy changes had been carried out without open disavowal of Stalin; he was corrected piecemeal and allowed gradually to fade into the background, and where explicit attacks on past mistakes could not be avoided, these were ascribed to Beria. Only now has Stalin's authority been openly demolished—first on a few specific points in Anastas Mikoyan's public speech, and then by the systematic reassessment of Stalin's "merits and errors" delivered in secret session by Khrushchev in a speech which is now being used as the basis of Communist "re-education" both in the Soviet Union and abroad. It is because of this open break with "Stalinism" that Mikoyan could rightly describe the congress as the most important one since Lenin's time. For in addition to the denunciation of many of Stalin's individual crimes, the reassessment has touched the central core of Stalinism as a doctrine and a method of rule.

The Bolshevik Party is unique in having maintained its dictatorship for decades after the completion of the original revolutionary task. Stalin's method of securing this domination and warding off a "Thermidor"—i.e. the shaking off of the revolutionary Party régime by the new upper stratum born of the revolution—took the form of the "permanent revolution from above": on the one hand, amalgamation of the ruling party with the new administrative and economic bureaucracy; on the other, the systematic use of state power by that party to bring about ever new social upheavals (typically in the process of forced collectivization and in the mass deportations of the purge era). The Party maintained its hold upon power by refusing to let the people

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settle down. Judging reality by reference to a dogmatically presumed Communist goal of social development, and finding its actual evolution tending in quite a different direction, it kept discovering a succession of "class enemies" who had to be destroyed by terrorist means.

This, and this alone, was the historic core of Stalinism—quite apart from any excesses and personal pathological traits. The dictatorship justified its existence by stressing the alleged necessity of a permanent struggle against the ever renewed growth of "capitalist tendencies"—it lived in a constant state of war with its own people. The compulsive urge to treat every kind of economic offense as high treason, every internal resistance as an "agency" of the capitalist besiegers, the general spy hysteria and absence of legal security followed from this basic situation. At bottom, any attempt at a "break with Stalinism" entails the question whether the régime can terminate this domestic state of war and still retain power—whether the Party can make peace with the Russian people and continue to govern.

The epoch-making feature of the twentieth congress is that it has openly raised precisely this question—which is not to say that it has, by any means, solved it. True, this was not done in the speeches that have so far been published, nor could we have learned it from the Western versions of Mr. Khrushchev's "secret" reassessment of Stalin. But all the authoritative statements since made on the subject by non-Russian Communist leaders—notably the article published by Walter Ulbricht, the East German party secretary, on March 4th (reprinted in *Pravda* on the following day, the anniversary of Stalin's death), the statement by Palmiro Togliatti to the Italian Central Committee published on March 15th, Harry Pollitt's article in the *Daily Worker* of March 24th, and the article by Jerzy Morawski of the Polish Party secretariat published in *Trybuna Ludu* of March 27th—all base their criticism of Stalin's policies and methods of rule on a condemnation of his thesis of "the intensification of the class struggle in the Socialist state, even after the complete victory over the capitalists and landlords had been established." This thesis, first pronounced by Stalin in his speech to the Central Committee of March 3rd, 1937, which inaugurated the "Yezhov era," the worst period of the great purge, had according to Togliatti led to "a desperate prospect of unending mutual persecution of one part of society by the other, even within the organizations of the working class"—and in practice to "suspicion in all directions and in all circumstances." According to Pollitt, it was also the direct cause for the placing of the security services above the Soviet government and above the Party, which enabled them "to make false charges against comrades and violate the Soviet constitution and Soviet laws."*

* Be it noted in passing that the rejection of Stalin's theory for the entire period after the destruction of the landlords and capitalists implies a condemnation also of his *methods* in achieving forced collectivization by the "liquidation of the kulaks as a class" and not only of the later purges; but this conclusion has not so far been explicitly drawn in public, and all official statements continue to list the collec-

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Though this revision of Stalin's central doctrine was not yet publicly proclaimed at the congress, it was tacitly implied in the absence, in all the hundreds of pages of published speeches, of any reference to the need for political struggle against the "internal enemy." It is the lack of this "dialectical" element that lends to the congress' discussion of domestic affairs such a strikingly technical and quasi non-political character: we are told much about tasks and accomplishments, successes and failures, models to imitate and examples of backwardness, old and new methods, initiative and bureaucratic routine—but there is nothing about the embittered resistance of class enemies, no appeals to "revolutionary vigilance" (except in relation to the arms budget), no calls for "merciless struggle." Nor is this merely a matter of terminology: to the change-over from an ideological to a technical vocabulary there corresponds the transition from administrative compulsion as the main instrument of economy policy to the introduction of such improved economic incentives as higher purchase prices to raise farm output, gradual shortening of hours as a stimulus to more intense work, etc.

This policy of substituting the economic carrot for the administrative stick was, as we know, introduced shortly after Stalin's death. It was the essence of the "new course" inaugurated by Malenkov's speech of August 1953. We have grown used to identifying it with Malenkov, especially in connection with the promise of a "steep increase" in the output of consumer goods. And we have come to regard Khrushchev as its chief opponent—as the leading advocate of continued priority for heavy industry and intensified pressure upon the peasants with the aim of preparing a "third agrarian revolution" that would nationalize the kolkhozes, a step urged in Stalin's last pamphlet as a precondition for the "transition to Communism." Malenkov's resignation last year and Khrushchev's evidently growing ascendancy were therefore widely interpreted as the end of the "new course" and the start of a fresh period of intensified internal class struggle, a further turn of the screw of "permanent revolution."

That interpretation, however, has not been borne out by the speeches at the twentieth congress or by the events which preceded it. The price concessions to the peasants have not been revoked, although so long as consumer goods output lags behind they are bound to result in inflationary tendencies. The pace of investment has inevitably slowed somewhat in comparison with the Stalin era, and the planned increase in consumer goods output, although more modest than that of producer goods, is considerable in the majority of branches. Khrushchev's "virgin soils" campaign has more than doubled the proportion of land directly owned by the state, but it still represents only a modest percentage of the total, and anyhow the campaign has suddenly come to a halt. Attempts to hasten the "transition to Communism" in accord-

tivization of agriculture along with industrialization of the country as one of Stalin's abiding merits and to confine practical criticism to the period starting in 1934.

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ance with Stalin's final prescription, by instituting direct exchange of goods between factories and kolkhozes instead of market transactions, were sharply condemned by Mikoyan at the congress because this would interfere with rational cost calculation—now proclaimed the most urgent task of all. The most important measure of farm policy during the past few years turns out to have been neither the virgin soils campaign nor yet the campaign to grow maize, but the "decentralization" of agricultural planning which allows the kolkhoz administrators greater latitude for independent, rational management. So far from representing the liquidation of the "new course," these measures amount to its continuation, modified by propaganda campaigns, but retaining its reliance on incentives rather than repression. They reflect a recognition of the fact that as the Soviet Union no longer disposes of practically unlimited reserves of manpower, its future economic expansion now depends primarily on raising the productivity of each individual worker and peasant, and that in consequence there is far less scope for the employment of repressive measures in economic life.

It is tempting to sum up the "line" of the twentieth congress as Malenkovism under Khrushchev's leadership. That, however, would be to overlook an essential point: while Malenkov proclaimed the new course in his capacity of Prime Minister at a Soviet congress, Khrushchev explains his policy as first secretary of the Party at a gathering of the latter. By the manner of his public pronouncements, as well as by his preference for governmental functions, Malenkov sought to harness in his favor the subterranean counter-pressure accumulated within Soviet society against the rule of a party which, under Stalin's personal reign and under the intra-party terror of his secret police, had long become a lifeless mechanism, and whose popularity had reached its nadir. By subordinating the secret police to the Party, and by rehabilitating many of its victims, Khrushchev on the contrary is trying to revive the Party and to allot it the leading role in the conduct of the new economic policy—so much so that he urges the Party functionaries to acquire business and technical experience and even seeks to give them a financial interest in the production results of their respective regions. Malenkov tacitly ignored Stalinist doctrine because he intended to reduce the Party to a secondary position; Khrushchev explicitly revises the doctrine because he aims at preserving the Party's rule by making peace, in the Party's name, with the Russian people.

This experiment certainly does not correspond to Khrushchev's original intentions, as witness his past record as Stalin's representative during the Ukrainian purges, and as the originator of the abortive attempt to found agro-towns. But the pressure of the social forces in the new, industrially developed Russia has apparently become so strong—notably since the destruction of the secret police's former hegemony in the course of the struggle among Stalin's heirs—that the last-ditch defender of Party orthodoxy has had to offer them incentives, at least in the

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economic field, which differ little from those a political agnostic like Malenkov was willing to grant.

It is typical of Khrushchev's eagerness to rehabilitate the Party by demonstrating its functional usefulness that he has undertaken to do away with the bifurcation of authority implied by the parallel operation of managers on the one hand, and "political sections" dealing with ideological matters on the other. First these sections were abolished in the case of the machine-tractor stations, and the district secretaries of the Party charged instead with "assisting" the M.T.S. by regular visits. Now Khrushchev has gone a step further by proclaiming the general uselessness of "political sections" in industry, on the grounds that Party functionaries are to take a hand directly in the productive process. This leads immediately to the problem of the "political deputies" (the former political commissars) in the army. Here, too, as was shown by Marshal Zhukov's speech at a meeting of Party members of the Moscow military district before the Party congress, the tendency is to strengthen the authority of the commanding officer (who is a Party member anyhow) under the control of the regional Party organization, and to deprecate the kind of political schooling which is kept separate from military training. The elevation of Zhukov to candidate-membership of the Party presidium, and the simultaneous disappearance from the central committee of the heads of the army and navy political departments, can only be regarded as confirmations of this trend; the same goes for the destruction of the legend of "Stalin the infallible war leader," and for the rehabilitation of the generals he killed. It is difficult to think of a more striking symbol of the attempt to preserve the Party's rule by reconciling it with the living forces of Soviet society.

II

The purpose of the whole experiment is to save the Party dictatorship, not to dissolve it. There is of course no question of democratizing the régime, or even of permitting a free, public discussion of political issues. In consequence, there can be no question either of returning to "intra-party democracy," for under the system of single-party control this would lead to factional groupings giving expression to the various conflicting interests within Soviet society. The official doctrine of "class-struggle from above" may have been abandoned, but the classes themselves continue to exist, and so do the pressures seeking expression at the political level.

Given this state of affairs, the "return to Leninist norms of party life" has a strictly limited meaning. Under Lenin, the legal existence of opposition groups within the Party was tolerated just as long as legal opposition parties were tolerated: both came to an end with the Kronstadt rising of March 1921 and the introduction of the New Economic Policy. The prohibition of intra-party factions was justified by Lenin himself at the tenth Party congress in March 1921, on the grounds that

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such groupings would become the vehicles of conflicting class interests; and although Party discussions over rival "platforms" continued nonetheless, not only under Lenin but until 1928 even under Stalin, their eventual suppression was the logical consequence of the earlier prohibition of factional groupings, and basically of the single-party system as such. The delay was simply due to the interval between Lenin's death and the concentration of power and authority in the hands of a single recognised successor. If conflicts within the ruling group are not to become public, final authority must be vested in a single leader strong enough to prevent an appeal to wider circles; the stability of single-party dictatorship thus requires the individual dictator.

Contrary to the "collective leadership" myth, everything we know suggests that three years after Stalin's death this position of power within the Party has largely been attained by Khrushchev. The conduct of the twentieth congress and the elections to the central Party organs, following various personal shifts during the preparatory period, all go to show that he has effective control of the Party machine. At the congress itself, no differences of opinion were publicly expressed; Khrushchev did not bother to sum up after the debate on his report, and indeed the great majority of speakers parroted their themes in the true Stalinist manner—except that their servile praise was reserved not for one man, but for the collective wisdom of the central committee. All those functionaries whom Krushchev, in his capacity as first secretary, had previously dislodged from their regional positions, disappeared automatically from the new central committee, whose election took place unanimously; each of its members and alternates—now numbering over 250—consequently knows to whom he owes his position. Apart from Khrushchev the central committee has seven secretaries, of whom five were appointed since his rise to power; four of them, in addition to himself, belong to the new presidium of eleven members and six candidates. Moreover, Khrushchev has acquired a new stronghold in the shape of the newly established bureau of the central committee for Russia proper, while the reorganized machine of the secret police is supervised on behalf of the Party by his subordinate Aristov, a member of the central secretariat, but *not* of the presidium—in other words a man solely responsible to Khrushchev himself.

This being the organizational set-up, the more frequent plenary sessions of the central committee appear as a means of subjecting the other members of the presidium to Khrushchev's control, rather than as a forum of democratic debate. What does seem likely is that Khrushchev is willing to permit genuine discussions *within* the presidium, much as Stalin did unil 1934, and that—also like Stalin in his earlier days—he does not aim at the complete elimination of unsuccessful rivals popular with the Party membership or the people, but on the contrary welcomes their public support of his policy and even their participation in carrying it out.

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The reality veiled by the talk about "collective leadership," then, is not a sharing of power within the presidium, but a different *manner* of exercising control. What is being attempted is a transition from arbitrary despotism to a kind of enlightened absolutism: the new boss is willing to listen, to learn from experience, to employ influential counsellors. Yet this change of methods results not just from the passing mood or tactics of a dictator who still has to consolidate his grip: it is the necessary corollary of the attempt to reconcile the ruling party with Soviet society, and to raise productivity by harnessing economic incentives, much as the style of enlightened absolutism in the past was the corollary of the attempt to foster the economic development of the middle class. Khrushchev could crush his inner-party rivals in the Stalinist manner—but he could no longer control Soviet society with a crushed party; hence he prefers to have independent-minded spokesmen of social "weight"—like Mikoyan, Malenkov, and Zhukov—within the inner councils of the Party.

Now such an attempt to reconcile the régime with Soviet society has been made once before: in 1934, following the end of forced collectivization and the completion of the first Five Year Plan. "Life is getting happier," the slogan of the brief Kirov era, could have been the motto of the twentieth congress; "back to 1934" sums up its intra-party meaning. Mikoyan's remark that the "cult of personality" had replaced collective leadership for almost twenty years takes us back to this date, the eve of the Moscow trials.

This is the key to the new directive concerning the revision of Party history and the rehabilitation of Stalin's victims. There is no necessary conflict between Khrushchev's renewed condemnation of "Trotskyites, Bukharinites, and bourgeois nationalists," and Mikoyan's demand for a new history of the civil war years. The collective decision evidently has been to confirm the *political* condemnation of the various opposition groups defeated by Stalin, but to dissociate the new régime from the horrors of the purge period. It is no accident that the first prominent victims to be rehabilitated—Kossior, Postyshev, Rudzutak, Chubar—were associates of Stalin in the Politbureau who supported his policy against both "left" and "right opposition groups, but were subsequently liquidated during the great purge because it would seem, they had opposed the arrest of Rykov and Bukharin on charges of treason. Logically the next step ought to be at least a partial rehabilitation of the Trotskyites and Bukharinites themselves, i.e. their recognition as men who advocated a policy rejected by the Party, but who had been unjustly branded as traitors and counter-revolutionaries. This would be so signal a contribution towards restoring objective standards of truth and justice as to make all but impossible a reversion to the specifically Stalinist methods of intra-party terrorism and falsification of history; it would in fact constitute a moral guarantee of the permanence of "enlightened absolutism."

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Whether Khrushchev (who himself helped at the time to purge some of the men now rehabilitated from the leadership of the Ukrainian party) knows it and likes it or not, men's thirst for truth is a real force. Now that the twentieth congress has given the signal for the opening of the Party archives, it will be difficult to bridle the eagerness of Soviet historians to get at the facts about the great treason trials. None of this can bring the victims of Stalin's terror back to life; yet if the Soviet Union should in our times return, for all the differences between her forms of government and ideology and ours, to respect for the common moral principles of civilized humanity, no one would be entitled to belittle so profound a change.

III

Any dictatorship needs enemies to justify its existence. If it hazards the bold move of renouncing the myth of the internal enemy, and of seeking a reconciliation with its own people, doctrinaire insistence on the irreconcilable conflict with the capitalist environment becomes all the more indispensable. For this reason, the changes in international policy and doctrine announced at the twentieth congress, while important in themselves, are with one exception wholly confined to the realm of strategy and tactics. They need not concern us in this analysis of the fundamental forces at work within the régime, but for a brief warning against misunderstanding their true character.

Two pronouncements made at the congress are likely to cause such misunderstandings. The recognition that world war is no longer inevitable—on the ground that the forces of the Soviet bloc and its sympathizers in the "imperialist camp" may now be strong enough to prevent the imperialists from carrying out their wicked plans—is certainly sincere as far as it goes, but marks no basic change in policy. In practice, the Soviet government always strove to avoid involvement in world war even in Lenin's and Stalin's time, including its most aggressive periods, and the new revision does not touch its fundamental belief that the world is sharply divided into two hostile camps—one "imperialist," the other "Socialist." Nor does the recognition that "peaceful," "parliamentary" roads to socialism are conceivable in certain conditions affect the other part of that basic dogma—that a Communist Party dictatorship ("The rule of the working class under the leadership of its Communist vanguard") is the condition of "socialism" and indeed of any economic and social progress, and that any state not governed by such a régime, including states with democratic Labor governments, remains subject to all the laws of capitalist decline. The revisions, in fact, merely concern the roads to Communist dictatorship—"parliamentary" as in Czechoslovakia or violent as in China—and the relations between the Communist blocs and its enemies, not the need for Communist dictatorship and for a Communist bloc.

The only exception concerns the relations among Communist states

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—the recognition that independent Communist revolutions, and independent Communist régimes, are possible, and that the Soviet Union must work with them on a fraternal basis and may even learn from them. This thesis is based on a return to Lenin's views as well as on the facts of the Chinese and Yugoslav revolutions; but it marks a truly fundamental break with the Stalinist dogma of "the leading role of the Soviet Union" which sought to deny that possibility. Like the break with Stalinism in domestic matters, it means both an immediate increase in flexibility and effectiveness—shown in this case in the reconciliation with Tito—and the creation of new problems, e.g. whether the satellite states, who have had no independent Communist revolutions and whose leaders have taken an active part in Stalin's anti-Titoist purge, shall remain Soviet satellites or be exposed to Yugoslav influence. The way may also be opened to a more independent development of the strategy of some other Communist parties, still within the framework of the general doctrine but with less regard to Moscow's "advice," particularly in Asia, but possibly also in Italy; their leaders have certainly been encouraged to try and win power by their own efforts.

IV

We have interpreted the twentieth congress as an all-round attempt to salvage the Party dictatorship, its present head, and its Leninist doctrine—not by retaining Stalin's methods but by abandoning them. The dictatorship is to be preserved by concessions to its subjects, the one-man rule by the myth of collective leadership, the dogma by flexible adaptation to experience. But if this is the purpose, two critical questions arise at once. Why was it necessary, after three years of gradual reform, suddenly to throw continuity to the winds and to demolish the traditional symbol of authority? And what are the chances, now that this has been done, of consolidating the régime on the new basis?

Both questions lead us back to the basic force behind the change —the accumulated pressure of the new society that has grown up within the hard shell of the party régime. Once again, a comparison with 1934 is instructive: then, Kirov's attempt to liberalize the régime led to the first flowering of "Thermidorian" tendencies, until Kirov's assassination gave Stalin the opportunity and pretext to start the purges and to develop his specific recipe for preventing the Thermidor by the "permanent revolution from above." Now, Stalin's heirs have deliberately returned to Kirov, but the Thermidorian forces are stronger by twenty years of social and economic growth, by the spread of technical and administrative knowledge and of military self-confidence founded on a victorious war. This time they cannot be broken so easily; even last year's defeat of Malenkov proved no more than a temporary setback for them. Hence Khrushchev is trying to canalize them, to win their confidence—and he finds that their price is rising.

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The open repudiation of Stalin, the admission that all the present Party leaders were helpless tools of his crimes, is not yet the Soviet Thermidor—but it is the greatest victory so far of the forces of the Thermidor; and this is true independently of whether Khrushchev's disclosures had been planned collectively before the congress, or whether Mikoyan's first public attack on Stalin came as a surprise and had such strong backing—from Zhukov?—that it forced Khrushchev's hand. For while the second version would be more dramatic, the basic forces at work would be the same in either case.

Can Khrushchev succeed in canalizing these forces? The answer lies with the peoples of the Soviet Union. On his side are the habits of more than a generation of Party government, the concentration of all political experience in the Party machine, and last but not least the remarkable new flexibility and self-confidence which liberation from Stalinist shackles has given to his team. Against him there is above all the moral effect so difficult to estimate from the outside, of that fantastic totem feast at which the collective of posthumously rebellious brothers devoured the remnants of their tyrannic father in full view of the nation. How far will the critical faculties of the millions who grew up in Stalin's shadow be awakened by this spectacle? What will they think of a Party which now admits that it has fed them lies for twenty years and has shared responsibility for the slow extinction of countless innocent victims, but asks them to believe that it will be the champion of truth and justice in future?

Yet, on another plane, the future of the régime may be decided by a hard and prosaic test—its ability to prove itself in the task of economic construction. The attempt to use the Party as an extra driving force of an economic system which tries to raise productivity with the aid of material incentives involves dangerous internal contradictions; the experiment has only just begun. Its risks may be shown briefly in connection with two basic problems of Soviet economics—the future of collective farming and the decentralization of planning.

The low level of agricultural productivity has for decades weighed heavily upon the entire Soviet economy, and it still represents the major obstacle to a notable raising of living standards. Since Stalin's death it has become the object of strenuous efforts on the part of the new leaders and particularly of Khrushchev himself. "Campaigns" such as the settlement of virgin lands or the increased cultivation of maize can at best lead to partial improvements, but do not touch the basic cause of the lag in farm output; for this lag is rooted in the structure of the collectives themselves.

The very form of collective farming implies two major hindrances to a steady rise in productivity. In the first place, the individual peasant lacks an adequate incentive for exerting himself on behalf of the collective; long years of experience have taught him that he cannot get enough out of the joint income of the collective, and in consequence

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he tends to concentrate on his small personal allotment and his private livestock, a tendency reinforced by his individualist tradition. In this respect the kolkhoz displays the drawbacks of a feudal manor whose serfs attempt in every way to limit the services they render to their lord.

But the kolkhoz also suffers from another weakness: it cannot calculate labor costs. The collective farmer does not earn wages, but receives a share of the net income retained by the kolkhoz, a share calculated in relation to the "labor days" performed by him. In consequence the kolkhoz always tends to waste labor and to "find work" for peasant families even where it yields very little, until and unless they decide to run off. The kolkhoz thus share the disadvantages of the small peasant farm which keeps going despite uneconomic methods, because the peasant exploits his own labor and that of his family.

The desire to transcend the present forms of collective farming is therefore not confined to the ideologists of the "transition to Communism." If the kolkhoz peasant could be transformed into an agricultural laborer for whom his private plot of land has only marginal significance, it would be possible both to focus his material interest on work for the collective (wages would of course be paid by piece-rates, under the Soviet norm system), and to rationalize cost calculation. But is it possible to carry out such a transformation without provoking bitter resistance?

Here we have one major test of Khrushchev's policy. During the weeks preceding the twentieth congress the Soviet press was full of suggestions for reforming the kolkhoz statute in that direction. Following the congress a decree was issued empowering the kolkhoz assemblies to scale down the private plots of members who fail to perform enough collective labor. At the same time the kolkhoz managers are advised to make cash advances on their members' share of collective income, thus introducing both an additional incentive to work and a form of wage payment (calculated on the basis of what a labor day is presumed to be worth). This decree is evidently a considerable step towards transforming peasants into wage laborers, but it is not at all clear how far it can be carried out without risking "intensification of the class struggle in the countryside," and consequently a threat to the conciliatory policy proclaimed by the leadership. The alternative would be to allow the peasants to leave the kolkhoz, a step which the great majority unquestionably still desire to take. That would certainly secure a sensible rise in output; but quite apart from the fact that it would presuppose a previous abolition of the forced delivery system if it was not to disrupt the normal exchange between town and country, such a "counter-revolution" is presumably beyond the horizon of Stalin's erstwhile colleagues. Thus the raising of agricultural productivity depends on measures which must evoke resistance either from the peasants or from the Party.

A similar though less drastic difficulty presents itself in the other

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great issue of Soviet economic policy: the decentralization of planning. Everyone in the U.S.S.R. knows that the biggest single factor in promoting waste, inefficiency, corruption, and black-marketeering has been the utopian attempt to establish central control over every detail of production in every single plant. In actual fact the economy only functions, and the overall plans are only broadly fulfilled, because the industrial managers evade the system of detailed bureaucratic control and "scrounge" for whatever materials or spares they need on the black market. Anyone who troubles to think in economic terms also realizes that productivity could be substantially raised and costs lowered if the central authorities could be brought to renounce this bureaucratic system of planning in detail. In fact, a number of measures have been taken during the past eighteen months to transfer responsibility for entire groups of industries to regional authorities.

But these reforms do not touch the core of the problem: the truth is that for a large number of minor economic decisions the most rational solution is not to plan them at all, but leave them to the discretion of the manager and his response to the market situation. (That discovery was made by the Yugoslav Communists at the beginning of 1952.) In that case, however, one has got to let the market fulfil its function without constant interference by propaganda campaigns. A market economy based on economic incentives can develop quite well within a framework of large-scale planning, but it cannot afford (and does not require) "socialist competition." If plants can rely on a steady flow of materials, if wage scales are rational, and if there are consumer goods to be had, people will anyhow work as well as they can—and what, in that case, becomes of the Party's role in the production process?

These examples should suffice to demonstrate the contradictions inherent in Khrushchev's attempt to maintain the Party rule without an internal enemy. It was noteworthy that the congress on the whole evaded such concrete issues. We are far from pretending that, in Communist parlance, these contradictions are "insoluble." But the solution clearly depends upon further zigzags of the régime's transformation.

And indeed this is the only prediction which can today be risked: despite the concentration of power in Khrushchev's hands, despite the genuine successes and the apparent consolidation, the régime remains in flux. Social pressures have already driven Khrushchev further away from Stalinism than he intended to go—in fact, beyond the point of no return. The twentieth congress marks a station on the road, an attempt to consolidate the Pary's rule internally and to reaffirm its dogma in relation to the outside world. But the dialectic cannot be halted: the dissolution of Stalinism continues.

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COMMUNICATIONS

Some Aspects of Mass Culture

Henry Rabassiere

Casting an indulgent eye on the merry-making of Flemish peasants, Breughel found it brutish, vulgar, lusty, gluttonous, bibulous and, possibly, dulling. Yet, nothing in his canvases suggests the suspicion that the feudal lords might have devised the popular culture of their time the better to keep the peasantry in submission. Pious monks might have believed that the Devil was to blame, but no serious historian would credit such views today. We condone superstition with reference only to our own culture. According to Gunther Anders (in DISSENT, Winter 1956), e.g., a dark conspiracy has foisted television on us for the purposes of profit, deception and subjection:

1) "The mass producer... needs a mass broken up into the largest possible number of customers; he does not want all of his customers to consume one and the same product (as in looking at a movie together); he wants all to buy identical products" (as in watching television separately).

2) "The method allegedly intended to bring the object close to us, actually serves to veil the object, to alienate it or slowly to do away with it"; the implication is that capitalism needs unrealisic subjects who live in a "phantom world," as the title of the essay says.

3) "Mass production of the mass man himself was speeded up," meaning that by watching TV we acquire, without being aware of what is being done to us, the character of the crowd.

Assertion No. 1 obviously means to inform us of a more shattering discovery than the fact that the electronics industry is interested in the sale of television sets; after all, automobiles and refrigerators are sold without any "phantom" assisting. The real phantom which bothers our author is the little man behind the grey screen; isn't it difficult to realize how he got there, economically speaking? Someone paid to put him there, so he must be a "commodity"; and, reasoning further, one such commodity seen by a thousand people in a movie theatre must bring less profit, hence be less capitalistic than the same picture appearing a thousand times on a thousand little screens.

This is poor economics based on misunderstood technology, and primitive sociology too. A TV program supplies one identical product to a large mass, just as the movies; in both cases the admission price is calculated on the basis of cost and profit. Like any other enterprise, the entertainment industry does not count its customers, but the sales value of its product, no matter whether it is divided into many or few lumps. But worse: How did "the mass producer" convert his "need" into a desire of his customers? It is one thing to say that some modern inventions came as a boon to industry; Mr. Anders implies quite

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another thing—that these inventions were so conceived, and we consumers were so conditioned, that the greatest number of goods can be sold at the highest profit. He still believes in the omnipotence of the overlords: his new version of the Iron Heel even gives them credit for a far more ambitious scheme: mass production, Mr. Anders says, has been so devised that "mass consumption produces mass man." As a witticism the *aperçu* might be superb; as a theory, expounded at nauseating leisure, it is misleading.

Consider this sentence: "The classical homeworker manufactures his wares in order to secure a minimum of consumer goods and leisure; the modern homeworker consumes a maximum of leisure products in order to help produce the mass man." The first "in order to" refers to the worker's intentions; the second "in order to," however, expresses the mystical power of the Iron Heel. An honest parallel to the latter statement would have been: "The classical homeworker manufactured goods in order to reproduce the social conditions which force him to manufacture more goods." Thus stated, we still have the primitive sociology, but at least the evil cycle of the producer society would be compared with the evil cycle of the consumer society.

Moreover, throughout his essay, as in the last quotation, Mr. Anders consistently idealizes and even idyllicizes the past. That noble worker in the Lord's vineyard seems never to have been conditioned by the ideologies of his terrestrial and spiritual overlords! That touching picture of the happy family, gathered around the big oaken table, seems never to have been marred by the tragedies which constitute up to 90 per cent of the thematic material in 19th century literature. Those lovers, before radio, must all have been highly articulate Cyranos, and no Christian ever needed the voice of a poet or the song of a musician to conquer first his shyness and thereafter the bride. Those heroes of yesterday never saw politics as a spectacle but went in there to fight it out for themselves; they never went to a circus, never read novels, penny dreadfuls and Radcliffe, never relied on newspapers for their knowledge of the world, never believed a Napoleon or a Mussolini before radio. Finally, these intellectual giants had no occasion to look at the world in an "idealistic" way, but were always aware of the reality behind the pictures that supplied their limited opportunities of information. What nonsense! All the indictments against "mass culture" are at least as old as Gutenberg—not to speak of Ovid. Ortega y Gasset added elegance and Anders adds brilliant confusion, punning happily along Heidegger alley where all lights are fueled by free association.

Granted that the new inventions may create opportunities for manipulation or tend to cripple our sensorial experience of the world; it still does not follow that mass communication methods doom our intelligence to misorientation. The truth is that at all times most public events are experienced vicariously and that each society has its special means of communicating to its citizens the preferred picture of reality; at all times did people rely on teachers, travelers, pictures and other second-hand information to form their view of the world. Today's mass media and extreme mobility potentially increase our sources of information to the point of universality, where cross-checking

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has become easy and wilful distortion has become difficult. The walls of the city and the walls of the home have been laid down; the idols of the market and the idols of the cave have been blown to pieces—Mr. Anders claims that these old and wholesome walls, the protectors of the *penates,* have been replaced by a wide screen where the idols of the theatre simulate an unreal world.

I do not wish to belittle the difference between reading and viewing. Certainly the latter opens more opportunity to suggestion. Yet, not so long ago, the printed word was held almost sacred by the masses; from escapist literature to tabloids, people at all times preferred to read and believe what reassured them, rather than what might shake their complacency. Of their own volition they gave the manipulators a monopoly of information. Today nobody thinks that the picture on the little screen represents the real world; everybody knows that the President uses make-up and tele-prompter; even the children who used to believe in Santa Claus know that Hopalong Cassidy is an actor. The television camera constantly prompts the experienced viewer to cheer the editor who switches to promising angles and selects the most interesting viewpoints. Mr. Anders is blind to the immense widening of our perceptive capacities through the camera.

While the possibility of deception is ever-present, the danger of deliberate manipulation and of "conditioning" through unconscious suggestion might even be declining. The ideals of our society may be less admirable than the virtues of ancient Rome; but if we live by them, not TV is to blame but the erosion of virtue that preceded popular culture. The loss of substance and certainty which characterizes the age began to be noticed eighty years ago by a generation of artists which did not call itself avant-garde but in relation to which our critics of TV are a sorry rear-guard. They first revealed the surface character of our experience, but now we have run full circle: in popular experience, manipulation is visible or suspected everywhere. We know that our environment is being manufactured for us, and after some more years, TV-experienced people may tend to believe nothing, just as they have become fairly immune to propaganda of other sorts. The illusions which we buy—a perfume, a movie, a popular song, a comedian on TV—do not fool us; they are consciously presented and accepted as illusions, not as truth. Far from living in a world of phantoms, we are facing the danger of complete disillusionment.

ANOTHER FACET OF THIS DEVELOPMENT is our loss of values. I deplore it as much as Mr. Anders does. But again—is the display of profligacy on big and small screens a cause or a symptom of the decline in the stature of our heroes? What had Hitler or Stalin that Cromwell or Cortez did not have? Is Gary Cooper less real than Robin Hood?

In this connection, Mr. Anders makes the shrewd remark that Socrates is being made over into a pal on TV and in popular science literature. The great men, he says, no longer are revered for their greatness but inserted into a world of appearances; they are known not for their unique substance but for that which the community of pals can understand. He might have addressed his reproach to Aristophanes, and he might have quoted in support of his own views any number of antique writers, beginning with Plato. They all

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complained that the *profanum vulgus* was taking over; they all hated themselves and others, begrudging the people their daily pleasures. I should have liked to meet Socrates; I understand he used to dine and wine with friends. He might not be less great for that. Plato's Socrates, whom Mr. Anders wishes to raise on a pedestal, is a completely phoney picture—a phantom, to use Mr. Anders's words. The mere fact that so many millions now can become familiar with him, makes Socrates a base commodity: "When the event can be... reproduced virtually any number of times, it acquires the characteristics of an assembly-line product; and when we pay for having it delivered to our homes, it is a commodity." Only professional philosophers turned theologians make such elementary mistakes in elementary logic. If I buy the print of a Rembrandt etching, not the meeting of Christ with the disciples at Emmaus is reproduced but its likeness; and neither the event nor Rembrandt's conception of it has become a commodity. What Mr. Anders means to say is much less mystical than the transubstantiation of an event into a commodity. Certain experiences—enjoying a work of art, meeting a great personality, reading a profound book—cannot be duplicated. The reproduction which pretends to be the original merely reminds us of it; the exciting moment of a live concert is not recorded along with the sound track; an "art appreciation course" substitutes learning for spontaneous perception. Manufacturers of such ersatz satisfaction surely would have us accept their wares for the real thing; clever producers even may exploit the real love affairs of a movie star or create suitable stories from the whole cloth to provide vicarious experiences for an audience that increasingly likes to have the proper feelings pre-assembled and delivered along with the "event." Not multiplication of the event, but vulgarization of its stand-in, not communication of an experience but predigestion of experience results in the stunted sensibility of mass culture.

In similar ways, totalitarian governments may create events for political exploitation; their policies often are designed to confirm the dream world where they keep their subjects. Occasionally they fall for their own phantasmagoria and walk into an abyss where they had seen a road to glory. Strangely enough, the totalitarian implications are not discussed by Mr. Anders, though everywhere else he insists on the modern-age nature of his phantom world. In the German version of his essay, which is more complete, however, he speaks of important mimesis phenomena which belong here. "In the beginning, there was broadcasting," he says ironically, "and the world was made to suit it." He concludes: "Were one of us to try and go forth in quest of the real world... he soon would be disappointed. For out there he would find nothing but models modeled after the pictures of which they are supposed to be the originals." It may be unfair to polemicize against something that was not published; yet I feel that the published fragment does not do justice to Mr. Anders. He has developed an interesting theory of cognition which may apply to human nature. His may be a great discovery, occasioned by certain outstanding traits of perception which now are more visible than before. He is wrong, I submit, in trying to make a double discovery—namely, that these features are characteristic of the present society. A sociological analysis of

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knowledge must start out from sound sociology and careful use of history. Certainly, Orson Welles's famous radio invasion from Mars says something about the United States in the 'Thirties—but have there not been panicky flights to the hills before, when a comet seemed to announce a new Flood? Certainly we pity the old ladies who start knitting baby clothes when their favorite soap opera heroine is pregnant; but did not Goethe get hundreds of letters from imaginary Lottes and did not would-be Werthers actually commit suicide?

Neither the economics nor the technical facilities of mass communication are to blame for the use which their owners make of them. We, on the other hand, are not helpless, powerless and hopeless in front of inexorable forces unleashed by industry's ingenuity or the Iron Heel's clever scheming. These phantoms were built up by the pseudo-radicalism of the snobs to justify their flight into the cultural preserve, a Messianic religion, political or other nihilisms. Not popular culture but their own craving for "alienation" keeps their eyes away from the realistic, "materialistic," Mr. Anders might say, conditions which must be changed. Mass entertainment can be debased by commercial or by political interests, but only if and while these interests retain their monopoly of communication. The ultra-left culture snobs from the start concede this monopoly to the interests. They have no real quarrel with the world as it is, except that they pretend not to like it that way. The hypocrites! They like it exactly in such a desperate state that they can lament about their impotence in facing it.

FOR THE NEWEST FASHION in mass culture is to scorn mass culture. Everybody does, nowadays; those who don't either are writing a book on mass culture or collect early jazz records. Conformism has come around full circle: one dares no longer be "conformist," enjoy any product of the entertainment industry, see differences between the two major parties, admit opinions which might be shared by the multitude. Those who cannot possibly be radicals of the left develop at least a radical or "new" conservatism; these nonconformists in reverse usually get along fine with the older variety of nonconformists in forward gear. In friendly competition, the two élites are trying to outdo each other at deriding the "mass." Members of their bi-partisan club display in their home a copy of *Partisan Review* together with a painting conceived in an advanced style (as to records, progressives favor Bach while new-conservatives may boast a Shostakovitch concerto played by Oistrakh), and are conversant with words such as alienation, popular culture, pseudo-whateverfashionis, anxiety, crowd, absurd and a few others, judicious use of which will silence the un-initiated and bring recognition from those who belong; many will grant you such recognition to be recognized themselves.

Non-conformist tolerance leaves a choice of many peculiar ways to exquisiteness. One may be an existentialist, a Marxist, a surrealist, a fascist—the crowd of frightened snobs will be so discriminating as not to discriminate against him. They may differentiate, though; through marginal differentiation between various crowds, each of them very distinctive, the crowd of the anti-crowds constitutes itself as an effective instrument of terror. No one ever

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dares to defy its edicts. To be amused by Groucho, to be excited by Armstrong, to be moved to tears by Molly Goldberg (or Werther, for that matter), amounts to backwardness, lack of sensitivity, vulgarity and cultural treason. One has to be alienated to be counted. For here is art, there is entertainment.

In their dread of being caught in a profane mood, would-be intellectuals alienate themselves from the sources of national experience and risk forfeiting their share in forming it. They refuse to see any transmission belt between popular and higher culture, or between popular ideologies and true ideals. Yet, popular culture may be a watered-down, vulgarized version of yesterday's class culture; it also may contain groping, unconscious adumbrations of tomorrow's means of expression. Contemporary indictments of jazz often are literal repetitions of similar pronouncements on the waltz 130 years ago. "Baroque" once had a meaning similar to our "kitsch," and already the suggestion has been made that the first half of this century may be known to, and admired by, posterity as the "Age of Kitsch." Kitsch, by the way, is most children's avenue to artistic expression—some never get beyond that stage, and much of the so-called folk culture, which often is favorably compared with our "mass culture," really is or was the mass culture of civilizations which knew few fashion changes. Though this difference may be decisive, it is precisely one where our mass culture and our non-conformists stand on the same side. Both fear nothing so much as yesterday's conformity. The mad chase for newness in "original creations" is fittingly aped on the assembly line of popular fashion. Mass production processes in the entertainment industries make its content repetitious, self-perpetuating, inflexible. It produces no original material but, on the contrary, transforms its consumer into a passive recipient of sense stimuli. There is no cross-fertilization, no participation in a creative process, but only the surrender to the narcotic effects of a merchandise. Popular culture no longer is entertainment which we provide for ourselves, but has become the supply of entertainment which we buy. All this is true, and serious, too. Our spectator sports, the Roman *circenses,* are opium for the crowds. Unable to escape the insanity of their existence, they purchase escape by the hour; incapable of facing their own feelings, they have sentimentality expressed for them; too sluggish to rebel against their impotence, they watch Superman conquer space and time.

Yet, these vicarious gratifications also express a yearning for a different world and reflect a search for a different humanity. The material content of some escape literature even points to pre-conscious states of rebellion. Sometimes in curiously inverted forms Al Capp, through his "Li'l Abner" cartoon, projects the immolated image of humanity into crudely ironical utopias. It is a gross overstatement that the alienation process in popular culture has gone too far for remedy and return. There is no conformistic material that cannot be turned into non-conformist outcries. Kung Fu changed a few words in a simple calendar to express his political criticism and everybody can think of many superb works of art issued from the new media. The technical characteristics of printing, photographing, filming, broadcasting, televising, recording do not restrict, but enlarge the range of our experience and the possibilities of expression.

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BOOKS

The Present Struggle for Power

THE PATTERN OF WORLD CONFLICT. By G. L. Arnold, New York: Dial Press, 250 pp., $4.00.

The series of wars and revoluions that mark twentieth century history show no sign of having exhausted themselves. No sooner do the power blocs patch up temporary and tacit agreements for a period of "peaceful competition," than there erupt new rebellions in Africa among the unconsulted masses. Within the Communist world a whole train of tensions follows upon the struggle to succeed Stalin. In the West rumblings of discontent (France, Spain) continue. The hoped-for stabilization is a mirage. And in the wake of these crises, new generations seek to find their way amid the wreckage of yesterdays plans and ambitions.

It is to the credit of the English political writer, G. L. Arnold, whose work is familiar to the readers of DISSENT, that in *The Pattern of World Conflict* he has managed, with both skill and realism, to cut through the confusion of daily events and provide a generalized picture of the contemporary world. Mr. Arnold writes as a moderate socialist, and his book has already caused some distress among our liberal reviewers; but it can also give the socialist some uncomfortable moments, for he is a writer impatient with formulas and cant. His special gift is not so much for erecting formidable new theories as for employing familiar concepts with unusual precision and refinement. He has the kind of mind that is rare among socialist (or for that matter, other kinds of) writers: he habitually questions his own predilections and assumptions.

Mr. Arnold starts with the familiar thesis of a polarized world society. He makes short shrift of the "neoliberal" beliefs that were once focused in the United Nations. Neither the assumption of "an international regime of free trade," he writes, nor its corollary of super-powers subjecting themselves to a "neutral agency actuated by a purely rational, i.e., purely technocratic conception of its duties" had any basis in reality. That is, he sees exactly the depth and extent of the struggle between the two major blocs in the world today, and in a first-rate if condensed section he describes how Germany, Britain and Japan "having traded knockout blows for over a generation... have all, though in varying degrees, lost their former status *vis a vis* the only two great powers left in the contemporary world, and become spectators, or at most second-

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ary figures, in a conflict transcending the old national and political boundaries." As a consequence of the break-up of the world market some decades ago, and because of universal tendencies set into motion by the impact of modern technology on both advanced and backward countries, we now have a new struggle for world domination which retains elements of traditional imperialist rivalry but also has new and unprecedented dimensions of ideological struggle.

In an account distinguished by analytical finesse, Mr. Arnold sets forth the evolution of the Western camp to its present difficult position, that is, the whole historical tendency that has made for a shift from a *Pax Britannica* to a *Pax Americana*. Because Britain displayed enough realism to accept a position subordinate to the Americans, it avoided the catastrophe of the Germans and Japanese, whose fully imperialist policy led them to defeat in war. Yet at the moment Britain hardly plays a role more significant than they do. And together with this development Mr. Arnold quickly sketches the growth of the Eurasian bloc, formed through victory in European war and through revolution in China. It is a particular mark of his skill that he is able to hold in balance, not allowing one to absorb the other, the view of the world struggle as a *power* struggle and the view that it is a battle of ideologies; he is very good at showing how economics, traditional institutions and new ideologies relate one to the other, both working together and jarring one another.

Still more important than the economic-strategic aspects of the struggle between power blocs, which partly corresponds to "an ordinary conflict over spheres of interest," is the political aspect. Seen from a long-range perspective, the political struggle resolves itself into alternative methods of coping with the task of unifying a world society that has, by every economic and human measure, become indivisible. Both sides are forced, willy-nilly, to face the problem of a massive tendency toward the final break-up of traditional society and its replacement by industrialized urbanism. The Communists propose to do this through an infallible caste of "professional revolutionaries" (i.e., a privileged elite of technological intelligentsia) and concomitant totalitarian methods of planning. The West, lacking any single direction, has a number of choices ranging from a simple and entirely obsolete reactionary policy to the possibility of central planning through democratic leadership responsible to the peoples of the respective states. In this struggle, the uncommitted and "underdeveloped" nations are seen as a potential power. "Throughout the greater part of the world the chief political issue today is Communist or non-Communist direction of revolutionary movements having for their aim a radical break with the pre-industrial past." In this struggle the "real issue lies between libertarian revolutionaries and others who can envisage the transformation of society only in terms of the Soviet experience since 1917. Revolution there must be, for no movement, however libertarian in its ultimate aims, will renounce the hope of using the concentrated power of the state to end the dreadful poverty and squalor in which the bulk of mankind still lives . . ."

Unfortunately, however, "the Soviet

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regime is able to exploit the historic cleavage between Western and Eastern societies, which runs parallel to the conflict of interest between industrial and agricultural countries." Not only can it take advantage of the Western imperialist past, but it can represent itself as the model of a nation which has by revolutionary methods successfully negotiated the process of transforming a backward agricultural society into an advanced industrial one. And here Mr. Arnold scores one of his most effective, and troubling, points: it is precisely its effective pattern of political domination that makes Communism attractive to the new elites in the backward countries as they struggle to transform their own societies:

> The totalitarian state may horrify liberals and socialist democrats, but it holds a very definite attraction for national revolutionaries in search of an instrument of control... A totalitarian party that does not shrink from challenging deeply rooted traditions (e.g., the individual's primary allegiance to the family clan), and which maintains close control over the daily activities of its members, has the power to break the vicious circle of poverty, bribery and inefficiency characteristic of a backward country. It may be very disagreeable but it is a fact that such parties have a considerable advantage where circumstances favor a "revolution from above" and a dictatorial regime to suit it.

By contrast, the West, to the extent that it limits itself to "short term economic advantages to foreign investors and local property owners," courts defeat in the "backward" countries—even when direct political control has been turned over to an indigenous leadership. Mr. Arnold is at his caustic best when he points to the inadequacy of Western liberal proposals for "more economic aid" and "more Point 4"; he demonstrates in completely convincing terms that what is needed is not a series of hand-outs, no matter how generous, but a far-reaching and integrated plan for social and economic modernization, a plan that is possible only if the advanced nations are ready to commit their own economic destiny to a common control. "The rejection of the primacy of profit—i.e., of private investment—is the *real* reply to the Communist attempt to fashion a lasting alliance between nationalist movements and the Soviet Union... [For] every departure from reliance on market forces, every step toward a planned and regulated economy, is potentially a step away from colonialism."

Keen analyst though he is, Mr. Arnold finds himself in the same difficulties that the rest of us do when it comes to proposed solutions. The minimum step he suggests for the West is Atlantic Union, which could take a form ranging from "full federation to loose commonwealth ties." He tries to face up to the problem of American hegemony in such a structure—his own data concerning the increasing disparity between U.S. and West European economic strength is impressive—and foresees at least the

BOOK MANUSCRIPTS INVITED

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possibility that the U.S. would behave "like the leader of a group of nations forming a community" in which there could be a variety of social forms. Still, it might be objected that a writer so critical of the "empty universalism" of the United Nations would be a little less sanguine that an Atlantic Union could avoid its own "empty universalism"—though he does show how the pressing nature of common problems should force America into the reasonable course he proposes. Here one suspects an excessively rationalist approach on Mr. Arnold's part, a failure to consider fully the tone and nature of domestic political life in America as it might affect such a plan.

Mr. Arnold is much more persuasive, however, in buttressing his political proposal by an economic analysis that shows the inability of Europe to maintain, let alone build, a viable economy unless there is a new form of association with America. If, he says, there is not a supranational market together with planned economy and full employment, the West may face a repetion of the disastrous inter-World War period with its unemployment, depression and inner decay of democratic institutions—a danger that increasingly inheres in the economic disproportion between Europe and America. And all the while, the Soviet Union and its supporting nations would be making enormous industrial advances and even liquidating some of the more inhumane features of their despotism.

It is difficult to take issue with much of what Mr. Arnold has to say. In his emphasis on the need for planning within the democratic world, he rightly criticizes the failures in thinking of democratic Socialists who were committed to the economics of a "free market" in former years. Yet in doing so he himself succumbs to their equation of economics and politics. In the past, one of the principal defects of European socialism was a kind of "colonialist" outlook that saw political democracy as developing only after the proper economic base was secured in the backward areas. Mr. Arnold makes a cognate error in seriously underestimating the possibility of maintaining democratic processes in the newly emergent states despite the social tensions that would follow from their economic development. In general, Mr. Arnold, in his estimable desire to avoid utopianism, tends to overlook the democratic and libertarian potentials that still are to be found among the peoples of Europe and Asia. For a socialist these energies should remain a major source of concern and hope.

Nonetheless, *The Pattern of World Conflict* is a book that merits the attention not merely of every serious reader, but also and particularly of those who are groping toward socialist alternatives in present-day politics.

MILTON SACHS

In the Fall Issue...

Bernard Rosenberg and E. V. Walter will discuss C. Wright Mills's new book "The Power Elite."

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From time to time—and in agreement with the organizations concerned—DISSENT will publish brief accounts of non-political organizations whose activities and purposes we believe should be known to our readers. We begin with the *American Committee on Africa.*

The American Committee on Africa

In 1953 the American Committee on Africa (ACOA), with headquarters at 23 East 35 Street, New York City, was formed. A need to interpret for the American people the new Africa, in the grip of political change and revolution, was the principle motive behind this action.

In addition, the founders of ACOA wanted an organization prepared to urge the American government to implement its policy of supporting the right of all people to self-government and to subject this policy to criticism and analysis. Also, in a practical way, they wanted to be of service to the African people through the many hundreds of African students in this country and through educational and service projects in Africa. It was decided to work through the United Nations as one medium to help achieve these ends.

The program of ACOA is carried out in the following ways:

• Through its monthly publication, *Africa Today* (a sample copy is available at the ACOA office), an up-to-date analysis of African affairs is maintained; pamphlets on Africa published in various countries are distributed.

• A project fund has raised and distributed thousands of dollars to further democratic education in Africa, to support schools opposed to apartheid in South Africa, to aid cooperatives, trade unions, schools and village health programs.

• At the United Nations ACOA's observer reports on current discussions and recommends action. ACOA likewise aids African petitioners who come from Africa to present their grievances at the United Nations. It also presents its views to the American mission at the UN on various questions.

• ACOA helps African students in the United States by sponsoring a job placement service, and advisory service on scholarship funds, and through meetings with African students.

• Special public meetings and conferences on topics of political and economic significance in Africa are held regularly. Attention is focused on problems of importance to Americans and a Speakers Bureau serves groups wanting information on any area of Africa. A series of conferences on the African arts and culture was recently held and followed by a series of forums on African political affairs.

These are the most significant activities of ACOA. It is expected that the increase of interest in Africa among American democrats and the "left" generally will stimulate both the growth and activity of this organization. Anyone interested in ACOA's objectives will find a ready welcome by writing to its office.

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Have you read . . . ?

"Couch Liberalism and the Guilty Past," Harold Rosenberg's vigorous critique of Leslie Fiedler's book, "An End to Innocence."

It appeared in the Fall 1955 issue of DISSENT.

Also in that issue: "Collectivism Reconsidered" by G. L. Arnold; "Instinctivistic 'Radicalism' " by Erich Fromm; "Neutralism and the Small Nations" by A. J. Muste; "The Middle-Class Hero" by Harvey Swados; "Proudhon: A Reconsideration" by George Woodcock.

Have you read . . . ?

Gunther Anders' provocative essay, "The Phantom World of TV" which appeared in the Winter 1956 issue of DISSENT.

And: "Keynesian Economics—A Critique" by Ben B. Seligman; "The Right to Be Lazy" by Henri Rabassiere; "Silone and the Radical Conscience" by Irving Howe; "The Masses and the Elite" by E. V. Walter.

Some copies available of both issues. 75c a copy. A few, a very few copies of earlier issues available. If you are interested in a particular one—write to us; we may be able to supply it.

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